Senior Secondary Course

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION (376)

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NIOS SENIOR SECONDARY - EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Complete Textbook (22 Lessons)

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1

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION: MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE

Early childhood refers to the early years of life starting from birth to six years. These years are called the formative years as the foundation for physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and language development is laid during this period. Researches in the field of neuroscience have established the importance of these years as growth and development of the brain takes place at a very fast pace. Early care, stimulating environment and optimum learning opportunities have a lasting impact on the lives of young children. This can be done by ensuring quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children during their formative years. Any kind of deprivation may have an adverse impact on the development of children. Thus, it becomes imperative to understand the meaning and significance of ECCE.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning and significance of ECCE;
- discuss the objectives of ECCE;
- explain the components of ECCE;
- highlight the importance of early intervention; and
- describe ECCE in the Indian and global context.

1.1 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ECCE

1.1.1 Meaning of ECCE

The term ECCE comprises of three key terms:- *'Early Childhood'*, *'Care'*, and

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'Education'. *Early childhood* is the period from birth to six years. According to the National Policy on ECCE, 2013, there are three sub-stages of early years, each with its own age-specific developmental priorities. These sub-stages are: (a) conception to birth (b) birth to three years and (c) three to six years. This is the most important period of life characterized by rapid growth and development. By *'Care'* we mean providing love and affection and ensuring a healthy, hygienic, protective and stimulating environment for all children. *'Education'* is a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes and values through exploration, experimentation, observation, participation and interaction. All such experiences help children learn more about themselves and the world around them.

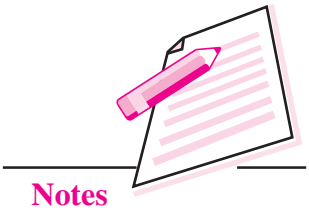
Thus, ECCE refers to providing care including health and nutrition as well as early learning opportunities to all young children. A protective and stimulating environment consisting of play-based and developmentally appropriate activities are vital for children's physical-motor, cognitive, socio-emotional and language development.

Hence, ECCE forms the basis for overall development, later learning and wellbeing of children.

1.1.2 Significance of ECCE

Compared to the other periods of life, the first six years of children's life are very important due to fast growth and development in all domains. Researches in the field of neuroscience confirm the importance of early years in children's life. According to these researches, development of brain takes place at a rapid rate during these years. By the time a child is six years old, 90% of brain development has taken place. As a result, this stage is considered crucial for the holistic development of children especially for the development of the brain. Any disruption in the developmental processes due to heredity or environment may affect adversely. Lack of a healthy home and school environment, paucity of stimulation, inadequate nutrition and poor health care are some of the common factors that lead to developmental delays among children. During these years, children acquire various physical-motor, cognitive, socio-emotional and language competencies. Hence, they should be provided opportunities to grow in a stimulating and engaging environment with positive experiences. Quality early care and education provided to young children through ECCE programmes enables them to acquire age-appropriate knowledge and skills which further help them adjust better in a formal school environment.

Thus, it is necessary to accord prime importance to ECCE for children to develop in an integrated, holistic and healthy manner. Different ECCE service providers must ensure access to equitable and quality ECCE for all children, especially for children who are disadvantaged.



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1.2 OBJECTIVES OF ECCE

The aim of ECCE is to provide quality care and learning opportunities to all children during their formative years for their overall development. National ECCE Curriculum Framework, 2013 has defined the objectives of ECCE. In the light of this document, let us understand its key objectives.

ECCE aims to:

- ensure that children feel safe, secure, accepted and respected
- ensure children have good and balanced nutrition
- inculcate healthy habits, hygiene practices and self-help skills among children
- enable sound language development, skills of communication and expression
- ensure optimum physical and motor development of children as per their potential
- foster sensory and cognitive abilities of children by providing engaging, participative and stimulating activities
- promote development of pro-social skills and social competence along with children's emotional wellbeing
- prepare children for formal learning in schools.

ACTIVITY 1.1

Discuss with parents in your community to find out how aware they are about the significance of ECCE.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1

1. State whether the following statements are true or false.

   (a) Early years of children's life are very important due to fast growth and development in all domains.

   (b) ECCE means ensuring care including health and nutrition as well as early learning opportunities to all young children during their early years.

   (c) Home and school environment do not affect children's development.

   (d) Disruption in the developmental process due to heredity or environmental factors may affect overall development of children.

   (e) A protective and stimulating environment is vital for holistic development of children.

1.3 COMPONENTS OF ECCE

ECCE is an integrated programme consisting of various components which together contribute to the development and wellbeing of children. Let us study its key components in detail.

Fig 1.1 Components of ECCE

1.3.1 Health, Nutrition and Hygiene

This component consists of providing regular health interventions to both the mother and the child. It encompasses providing prenatal and postnatal care to the mother in terms of provision of healthy nutritious food, timely immunization of the pregnant mother, regular health checkups, stress-free environment and safe child birth at a hospital or a health centre.

Similarly, all children need to be provided with a healthy and hygienic environment comprising of well-balanced and nutritious food, protection from infections, timely immunization and provision for medical care.

1.3.2 Care and Protection

A physically and emotionally safe, secure and protective environment is essential for all children for their optimum growth and healthy development. Providing a caring and protective environment is an integral component of ECCE. It is essential for caregivers to ensure psychological and socio-emotional needs of children. It can be done by responding to their needs through appropriate stimulation, supportive and warm interaction and ensuring a healthy and safe environment.

1.3.3 Early Stimulation

As you have read, development takes place in physical-motor, social-emotional, cognitive and language domains, all of which are interdependent. During the first few years of life, rapid growth and development occur in all domains of development.

Early stimulation refers to providing appropriate stimulating inputs through seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting to children especially during their first three years of life. The goal of the stimulation is to promote children's potential by enhancing positive interactions with parents or caregivers, and opportunities for exploring the environment. Research supports that stimulation helps in brain development by creating neural pathways which further support learning in later years. Hence, it is important that during their early years, children are provided with a stimulating environment which is rich in a variety of age-appropriate materials, experiences and opportunities for development.

1.3.4 Early Learning

Providing opportunities of early learning is yet another important component of ECCE. Children in the age group of three to six years must be provided age- and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. It is impreative to ensure access to quality education comprising of play, concrete experiences, observation, manipulation and experimentation. This helps them learn about themselves, others and the world around them.

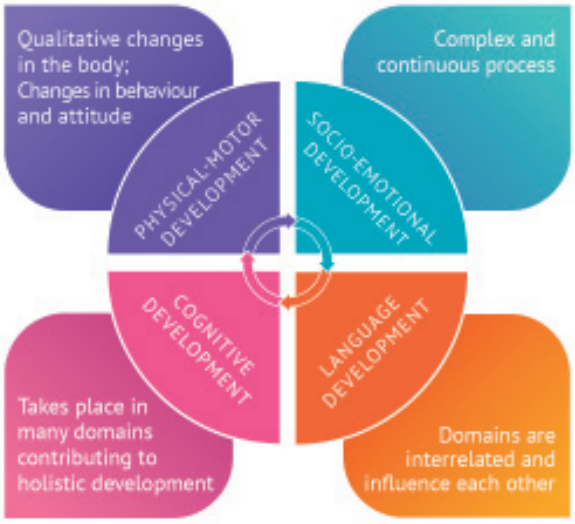
Qualitative changes in the body; Changes in behaviour and attitude
Complex and continuous process
PHYSICAL-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT
SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
Takes place in many domains contributing to holistic development
Domains are interrelated and influence each other

Fig 1.2 The Process of Development

Physical - Motor Development

Physical growth and development include increase in height, weight and changes in the proportions of the body structure. It includes the development of bones. The entire structure of the body depends on the bones, i.e. on their size, proportion and density. They give an overall configuration and look to the body. Physical and motor development also involves the process of development of gross and fine muscles and eye-hand coordination. Development of gross muscles helps children in activities like, crawling, walking, running, cycling, climbing, jumping etc. Fine muscular development helps them in activities such as holding a crayon, scribbling, drawing, colouring, threading, cutting and writing.

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Socio-emotional Development

Social development is aprocess of acquiring social norms and cultural values. Healthy social development enables children to form positive relations with family, friends and other people in life. Emotional development refers to the development of emotions and feelings in children. Children are born with basic emotions such as love, fear, anger and happiness etc. They develop complex emotions and their ability to recognize, express, and manage feelings over time.

Cognitive Development

It refers to development of mental or cognitive abilities such ability to think, remember, recognize, categorize, imagine, reason and take decisions.

Language Development

It is a process of acquiring, understanding and using language.It involves the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills help children to communicate with others and to express their feelings.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2

1. Fill in the blanks:

   (a) ECCE is helpful in _____development of children.

   (b) Language Development refers to acquiring……. and ……

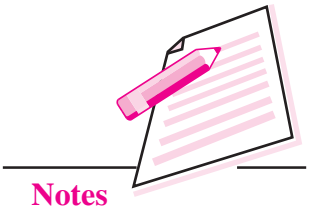
   (c) Physical-motor development involves the process of development of …., …. muscles and .....….coordination.

   (d) …….are the examples of development of fine motor skills.

1.4 EARLY INTERVENTION

Before we discuss the meaning and significance of early intervention, it is important to know the meaning of developmental milestones and developmental delays.

Developmental milestones are the age-specific acquisition of skills and competencies in each domain. Children under normal circumstances are expected to achieve the milestones in their respective domain i.e. it is expected that certain competencies would appear at particular age ranges. If children lag behind the normal pattern of growth, they may have developmental delay. That means that children do not achieve the developmental milestones at the expected times. They fail to progress at the same pace and reach the milestones as expected of them at that particular age. There can be various reasons for developmental delays in children such as heredity, complications during pregnancy or child birth, illnesses, and accidents after birth.



It is important to observe the signs of developmental delay in children to provide them appropriate and timely intervention. Early intervention means taking necessary actions as early as possible to work on children's developmental and learning needs, thus reducing the effects of any developmental delay. It means introducing the right kind of interventions in children's life as early as possible when their mind is most receptive to learning new things.

Therefore, regular health check-ups of children should be undertaken and a health record should be maintained. Health examination should include general appearance, body structure, recording of pulse, breathing rate, temperature, measurement of height, weight, chest and abdomen. Examination of neck, eyes, ears, nose, throat, teeth, skin, hair, nails, vision, hearing, mental responsiveness, movement of limbs, urine and stool examinations should also be done. This helps in early detection of defects. If any problem is diagnosed or reported early, it can then be immediately attended to.

Physical and sensory impairments especially impede children's development. For example, if any child has sensory impairment, that child might find it difficult to interact well with the environment. This may have ripple effects and the child's language and socio-emotional development may also slow down. If a child is called repeatedly and the child does not respond, it may be that the child has difficulty in hearing. Similarly, if a child does not speak even after a certain age, then he may need support to acquire the skill of speaking as per age. Thus, timely identification helps to provide early intervention to children. If a child's developmental delays are not addressed on time, then these temporary delays may become permanent. Any intervention given at a later stage will not be sufficient to catch up. Large numbers of children in our country are susceptible to multiple risk factors in the early years of life including poor health, malnutrition and low levels of stimulation in the home environment. So, it is even more important to detect early developmental lags and provide corrective inputs for it.

1.5 ECCE IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

There has been a growing awareness about the importance of early years and the need for providing quality early care and learning opportunities to young children. Many educational thinkers have contributed to the field of ECCE, expressing their thoughts about the way children grow, think and develop. In India, the early pioneers of early childhood education include Gijubhai Badheka, Tarabai Modak, and Maria Montessori.

Gijubhai Badheka believed that good education is very important for the proper development of children. For this, he founded 'BalMandir', a preschool in Bhavnagar, Gujarat in 1920.

Tarabai Modak also made significant contributions in the field of preschool education in India. In 1926, she founded the Nutan Bal Shikshan Sangh in

erstwhile Bombay, now Mumbai. Here, children from different backgrounds learnt through activities and real-life experiences.

The Montessori Method founded by Maria Montessori is an approach to preschool education. It has had a profound influence on the lives of young children all over the world. It is intended to support the natural development of children in a well-prepared environment.

The writings of great Indian educational thinkers such as Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Zakir Hussain have also drawn attention to the care and education of children during the formative years of life. They opined that education to children must be imparted in their mother tongue and should be closely connected to their social and cultural environment and the community in which children and their family live.

At present, ECCE services in India are made available through public, private and non-governmental organizations. The Government of India has made significant contributions to improve the accessibility and quality of education provided to young children. In 1975, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme was launched by Government of India to address health, nutrition and the development needs of children under six years. It is a unique and an integrated programme for early childhood care and development. It also encompasses the care of pregnant women and lactating mothers.

In recent years, the focus on ECCE in the Five Year Plans and formulation of the National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013 in India has further opened opportunities of access to quality care and early education by young children.

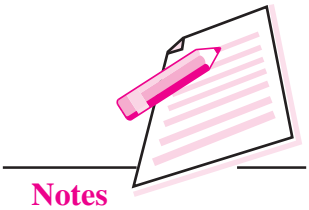
Private un-aided ECCE centres such as nurseries, kindergartens and pre-primary sections in private schools also deliver preschool education in the country, especially in urban areas. In addition, several NGOs have also been conducting the ECCE programmes.

1.6 ECCE IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

The importance of ECCE has been recognized globally as well. It started in 1989 with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which is an international agreement for child rights. It intended to protect and promote the wellbeing of children in terms of their survival, health, education and protection.

The World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 emphasized that 'learning begins at birth' and promoted early care and education as a must that needs to be provided through the involvement of families and communities.

In addition, the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 also reiterated the importance of ECCE. It reaffirmed that education is a



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fundamental human right, and set objectives for achieving Education For All (EFA) goals to ensure basic education for all children.

Recently, World Education Forum held in 2015 at Incheon, Republic of Korea, set up the goal for sustainable development recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goal 4 targets that, "by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education, so that they are ready for primary education".

In line with these global commitments, India is striving to ensure access to quality ECCE to all children of the country.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.3

1. Tick Yes or No:

   (a) The ECCE services in India are made available through public, private and Non-Governmental organizations. (Yes/No)

   (b) Developmental delay means that children achieve the developmental milestones at the expected age. (Yes/No)

   (c) ICDS is an integrated programme for children in primary classes. (Yes/No)

   (d) Early intervention refers to taking necessary actions as early as possible to support children's developmental and learning needs. (Yes/No)

   (e) Sustainable Development Goal 4 is related to education of young children. (Yes/No)

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt that:

- Early years mean the first eight years of life.
- ECCE refers to the care and learning opportunities provided to children from birth to six years for their holistic development.
- ECCE comprises of health, nutrition, care, protection, early stimulation and early learning as its components.
- Development is a complex and a continuous process. It takes place in the physical-motor, socio-emotional, language and cognitive domains. These domains are interrelated and influence children's holistic development.
- There can be several reasons for developmental delays in children such as hereditary, complications during pregnancy or child birth, illnesses or

accidents after birth etc. Early identification is essential to identify any developmental delays in children. Timely intervention must be provided to children with developmental delays to address to their developmental and learning needs.

- ECCE in the Indian context includes the thoughts of educational thinkers and Government initiatives towards promoting ECCE in the country including ICDS, 1975 and National ECCE Policy, 2013.
- The emphasis accorded to ECCE at the global level including Sustainable Development Goal 4 targets ensure access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education to all young children so that they become ready for primary education by 2030.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Explain the meaning and significance of ECCE.
2. Write briefly the key objectives of ECCE.
3. Discuss the key components of ECCE.
4. Why is ECCE important for holistic development of children?
5. Briefly describe ECCE in the Indian context.
6. Discuss ECCE in the global context.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

1.1

(a) Yes

(b) Yes

(c) No

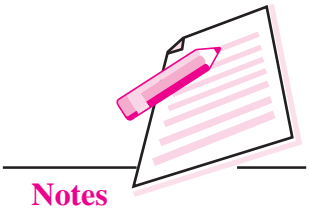
(d) Yes

(e) Yes

1.2

(a) holistic

(b) communication, expression



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(c) gross, fine, eye-hand

(d) writing, colouring, drawing

1.3

(a) Yes

(b) No

(c) No

(d) Yes

(e) Yes

GLOSSARY

- **Competencies:** Abilities or skills required to do any work.
- **Holistic:** Development of the physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language competencies of children in an integrated manner.
- **Neuroscience:** The study of nervous system and the brain.

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2

EARLY CHILDHOOD IN INDIA

In the previous lesson, you read about the significance of early childhood care and education. Let us now reflect on some fundamental questions.Who is a child? When does childhood begin or end? What are specific childhood experiences? What are the realities of growing up? How do cultures view childhood?

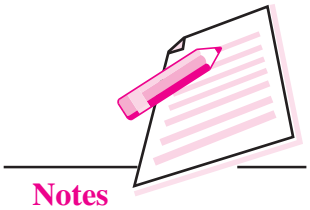
Most Old World civilisations did not consider childhood an important period of life that needed special attention and identity. Historically, childhood was not an independent social category until the beginning of the 18th century. Families were occupied together and children learnt tasks of life by being a part of family and community. After the Industrial Revolution, when machines replaced men, there was a division in adult roles. Children's employment in factories led to the first collective uprising demanding that children be protected.

With the understanding that childhood is for learning to be independent, new forms of teaching children took shape. Schooling became an important part of social fabric. Now, societies are talking about compulsory schooling. Slowly, changes in people's lives have raised demand for out-of-family childcare support. Research about human growth and development have yielded evidence that early childhood is a crucial phase. In India, the diversity and wide range in social and economic influences impact some groups adversely and children may be unable to realize their full potential. Cultural, ethnic and geographical variations also bring in different contexts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the status of young children in India;
- explain factors contributing to diversity in early childhood;
- discuss factors influencing early childhood; and
- evaluate the status of a child in India on various indicators.



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2.1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

The period from birth to six years is time for rapid development. In this stage, absence of experience and deprivation can be detrimental for growth. Care and stimulation are critical during early childhood or the first three years.

Globally, children are under some form of adult surveillance because they need supervision. Most communities have ways to socialise children for adult roles. Children are vulnerable, especially when very young. They need to be cared and protected with opportunities to realize their potential despite the varying contexts depending on geographical location, social conditions and biological disposition. Legally, children are those under 18 years of age. It is also important to examine social geographies of children which really means the environment and ecology of where they live. Children's experiences, poverty, dysfunctional families, working children, child homelessness are social contexts affecting them. If children are provided healthy meals, love, care and opportunity for exploration in safe environments, they will thrive and realise their optimal potential. However, if families are living in difficult circumstances with difficulty in daily living, with little resources for food, clothing and shelter, children are bound to be deprived. Family by force may not be fully available to meet the needs of children leading to children being ignored. These are extreme situations, however, there are multiple factors that influence children and their situations.

2.2 CHILDREN AND CHILDHOOD

Each culture defines children and childhood differently, which is due to the evolution of the cultural consciousness of people of those cultures over centuries. These shape how people within cultures behave with, and relate to children.Childhood is generally a time of playing, learning, socialising, exploring, and worrying in a world without much adult interference, aside from parents.

2.2.1 Status and Profile of Young Children in India

Children are the future of the nation. Therefore, it is important that all children grow into healthy, positive-minded, educated adults who contribute meaningfully to national development. A nation progresses when its citizens are healthy, educated, economically independent and contribute to national growth.Currently, progress of nations is evaluated not merely by economic assets but also by the status of the young and the old. Infant mortality rate, longevity and the literacy rate are important determinants of the Human Development Index (HDI).

India is a multi-cultural pluralistic society where people of different religions, languages, social backgrounds, and economic backgrounds co-exist in diverse social environments. It is a vast nation with a population of more than 1.21 billion people, the second-most populous country in the world. India is home to over 440 million children (0-18 years), the largest number in any country in the

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world. The child population data reveals that there are 158,789,287 children in the age group 0-6 years which is 13.12 percent of total population as per Census 2011.(*http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/paper_contentsetc.pdf)*

2.2.1.1 Demographic Profile of Children in India

Statistical figures indicate disadvantage faced by large chunks of the population. The figures are distressing due to uneven distribution of economic resources, lack of access and awareness. Lack of resources and low buying power leads to ill health, high-density living and unhygienic living conditions. Certain figures provide an idea of the poor state of health of children and ability of families to provide for children. As in most countries, many surveys have been conducted to understand the state of children in India. Let us see comparative figures from surveys conducted in 2005-2006 and in 2015-2016.The data from Fact Sheet of the Fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4, 2015-2016) conducted by National Institute for Population Studies (http://rchiips.org/nfhs/pdf/NFHS4/India.pdf) shows that Child population (0–6 years) is 158 million. This has not changed in the last 10 years. There has been a decrease in fertility rate besides other features of population indicators such as use of birth control methods or improved health status. The male to female child sex ratio has marginally gone up in ten years from 914 to 919. The ratio is lower in urban areas indicating a gender bias for male children in cities and towns.

Despite high population density and insufficient services,several factors have contributed to marginal rise in the state of India's children. More families have access to health care and awareness to ask for support for newborns. There has been a rise in taking assistance of trained medical personnel for birth of babies. More children are surviving and getting immunised.

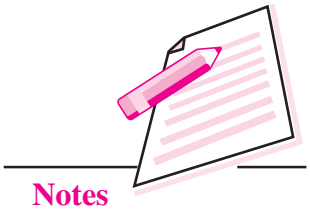
2.2.1.2 ChildMorbidity and Mortality

Child mortality refers to total number of child deaths under the age of five years per 1000 live births. *Infant mortality* is the death of young children under the age of one year. This death toll is measured by the *infant mortality* rate (IMR), i.e the number of *deaths* of children under one year of age per 1000 live births. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infant_mortality).

There is an increase in institutional births, and there is more medical attention for newborns. In 2015-2016, 2.5% of newborns received medical attention within 24 hours as compared to 0.3% ten years ago.

Infant Mortality Rate(IMR) has gone down from 57 to 41 in the last ten years. Reasons for lack of survival are infection, disease and lack of hygienic living conditions.

Under Five Infant Mortality Rate (U5IMR) has also come down by 24 in ten



years from as high as 74 children per 1000 live births. In 2015-2016, the U5IMR was 50. More families have improved sanitation and clean drinking water.

Indictors	Urban	Rural	Total
Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)	29	46	41
Under-five Mortality Rate (U5MR)	34	56	50

Source: India Fact Sheet, National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4, 2015-2016), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Government of India

2.2.1.3 Maternal Mortality and Health

Maternal mortality refers to death that occurs due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth. If a woman is pregnant or dies within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, it is also referred to as maternal mortality. A number of initiatives have been taken by the government to reduce maternal mortality. The World Health Organisation (WHO) commended India's progress in reducing maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by 77% from 556 per 1000 live births in 1990 to 130 per 1000 live births in 2016. (https://currentaffairs.gktoday.in/tags/maternal-mortality-ratio). Maternal mortality affects the survival and development of the child. It is related to mother's age, health and wellbeing. The NFHS (2015-16) provides encouraging details about decrease in the number of women married under 18 years of age. It is 26.8 as compared to 47.4 in 2005-06. This directly impacts IMR as girls below 18 may not be ready for robust motherhood.

2.2.1.4 Health and Nutrition

There is a direct connection between good health and development. When a child is born, families are advised about immunization schedules. The local ICDS centres often provide primary health care and immunization through regular clinics or specially arranged camps. The nutritional status of children in India has been abysmal.However, recent efforts have led to positive outcomes,especially a total eradication of polio. A number of programmes have been initiated by the government to improve the health and nutritional status of children.

The most recent estimate in 2015-2016 from NFHS-4, indicates that 35.8% of children under five years are low in weight, while almost 38.4 do not gain height. This wasting (not enough weight) and stunting (not enough height) are signs of malnutrition and lack of stimulation.

For good health of both mother and child,breastfeeding is best both from the point of wholesome diet for the newborn and protection from infection. Currently, the suggested norm is for newborns to be on breast milk exclusively for the first six months. NFHS-4 data records 41.6% mothers can breast feed within one hour of delivery while 54.9% mothers breast fed babies under six months.

Notes

Most communities have a prescribed set of foods that help mothers lactate. There are customs to celebrate the child's transition from breast milk to semi-solid foods at about six months of age.

2.2.1.5 Education

NFHS-4 data indicates that 68.8% of children are attending school, i.e 10% more than in 2005. Although total number attending school has improved, quality of education in manyschools needs improvement to maximise the benefit to children. There have been attempts to create play-based learning environments for young children. The role of Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013 has been phenomenal in getting recognition of age-specific needs of children under six years.

Maternity Benefit Amendment Act 2017 focuseson the need for care of children under three years. The Act makes it mandatory for workspaces to provide childcare facilities. Such a directive from the State has focused on the role of early stimulation and play for babies.

2.2.1.6 Gender

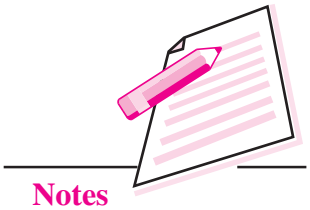
Childhood is sometimes influenced by how society treats children. A nation cannot progress until all members of society are given equal rights and opportunities. If there are gender disparities, we cannot progress as a nation.

Let us review how data presents gender status.There are many issues related to the girl child like, there is denial of health care facilities and nutrition, early dropout from schooling, low literacy rates in comparison to boys (girls 65.5% and boys 82.1%, Census of India, 2011) and fewer economic opportunities.According to Census of India, 2011, there were 944 females to 1000 males.

The NFHS-4 data indicates the sex ratio for general population at 991, a drop of nine in 10 years. In 2016, the sex ratio was lower in urban areas. Overall, in 2015-2016 there was an increase in ten years by more girls surviving figure changing from 914 in 2005 to 919 in 2015.

2.2.2 Diverse Social, Cultural and Economic Context

It is important to discuss cultural factors defining differences as the variations in belief systems, availability of resources and nature of attitudes, influences and experiences that unfold for children. Diversity in India hinges on physical, social, cultural, linguistic,religious and other ethnic factors including food, clothing and customs**.** India's geography is diverse and the country can be divided into several regions viz. Himalayas, northern plains, central plateau and Deccan, Western andEastern Ghats, Thar Desert etc. The differences in climate,



temperature, vegetation, fauna give a unique feature to people in each region. They differ in looks, dress and the physical conditions influence the social lives.

2.2.2.1 Culture, Caste and Tribes

There are many caste groups.Caste has been a major source of diversity in Indian society and often becomes a source of discrimination.The supposedly lower castes in India have historically been denied access to productive resources such as land, education, credit and access to places of worship. Economic deprivation led to other forms of discrimination such as untouchability, cultural restraints on sharing food and water and physical segregation within village communities. Such negative social and cultural conditions deplete children's self-worth and identity and makes them submissive. Low motivation impact the individual's growth and development negatively. It limits opportunities available to them and narrows their growth prospects.

Scheduled Tribes are mostly located in forest or rural areas, with distinct socio-cultural beliefs and practices, deeply interlinked with forest ecology. Their distinct lifestyle and remote locations have led to outright exclusion from services, or 'adverse inclusion' where the price of integration into 'mainstream' stratified society has been the loss of cultures and languages.

2.2.2.2 Religious Plurality

Religion is one of the key facets of diversity, along with caste, gender, disability and age. India is a secular, multi-religious and multicultural country. It is a land from where religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism have originated and flourished with religions like Islam and Christianity and tribal religions.

The Constitution of India forbids any discrimination on grounds of religion. Religious differences impact everyday life of children and sense of identity. School authorities need to be aware of norms and practices of different religions. Religion defines dress, food habits, customs, celebrations and festivals. Children would like to be included in festivities and see some connection between home and festivities at school or in the community.

2.2.2.3 Types of Family Configurations

In India, there are many kinds of households ranging from a small unit of parents and child, to extended members such as families with grandparents living together. Children living in different family set up will have a range of experiences. Some children may grow up with many children and learn a lot by modeling older siblings or cousins. The adult-child interactions and opportunity to bond with people vary, depending on the number of adults and how they get along with each other.

At times, single women face discrimination and subsequently children also feel the brunt of their mother's social positioning. Women who have lost their husband face violence and humiliation at times,from their husband's families as well as in their own. They are commonly denied inheritance rights, and often forced to live on their own. As sole breadwinners of their families, they struggle to provide for their children and constitute a large percentage of the marginally employed and unemployed. Upbringing of children of such women is also compromised as a result of poor economic status and facilities.

Other family configurations include adopted children. In case of finding home for abandoned children, care should be taken to create a responsive and loving environment. In some situations, there are alternate families with children being adopted or born through surrogacy or In vitro fertilization.

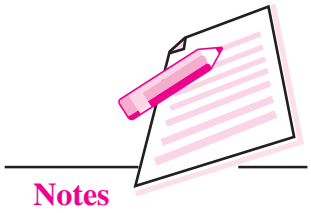
2.2.2.4 Children with Disabilities

Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized and excluded groups in the society. Many do not complete primary or higher education. An effort is being made by both government and private schools to bring children with disabilities into the mainstream. Families will need to address the special requirements of children who have special conditions. Often, there is need for extra care by parents. Children who are not disabled often need counseling to understand the differences in ability and learn to reach out to all with empathy.

2.2.2.5 Migrants

There are an estimated four to six million children who are victims of migration. Employed in the unorganised sector, semi-skilled and unskilled migrants are vulnerable. These range from exclusion from access to basic services and livelihood support, exploitative working conditions (i.e. denial of minimum wages and non-payment of wages, lack of social security and bargaining power), gender-based wage discrimination, and the denial of maternity rights and access to childcare services (with implications for child welfare). Seasonal migration is also particularly disruptive for children, often leading to denial of a child's right to education.

So, the status of children varies in terms of demography based on opportunity and social geography (location and social position). In our country,there is a wide range of circumstances in which children lead their lives. The statistics and social attitudes reveal that the present state of affairs is not equal for all children. A lot needs to be done to provide wholesome care to develop their potential to the fullest.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1

Match Column A with Column B.

Column A	Column B
(i) Lack of resources	(a) play-based learning environments
(ii) Child mortality	(b) future of the nation
(iii) Children	(c) multi-cultural pluralistic society
(iv) India	(d) ill health, high-density living and unhygienic living conditions
(v) ICDS centres	(e) total number of child deaths under the age of five years per 1000 live births
(vi) Education in early years	(f) primary health care and immunization

2.3 IMPACT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ON SUBSEQUENT LIFE

Early childhood is a sensitive period in human development, shaped by the child's genes (nature) and experiences (nurture). Nature means the influence of an individual's genes on development and learning. Nurture means the impact of various environmental factors like family, care, opportunities to explore, education, upbringing etc. on the development and learning of children. Both nature and nurture influence the development of the child.

In the previous lesson, the importance of early years was discussed. It is the period when brain development takes place at a rapid pace which is also an important factor for other developments. The first three years are crucial as children use or lose what they have, as also 'serve and return'. These two phrases have been coined in a paper (Shonkoff, 2005) to convey the potency of care and stimulation for children's minds to flower. If the brain is not used by way of exposure, there is no will to learn. The child may be listless, while on the other hand, the way you care and be responsive to children the more benefits the child will reap.

During the early years, the children need to grow in a stimulating, happy, caring and healthy environment that provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, freedom of movement, interactions, good food and nutrition, toys and objects for proper development and learning.Research on early child development and education have established the positive impact of such an environment on the development of the children. On the other hand, if the child is brought up in a dull environment, does not get proper nutrition, faces abuse orneglect or falls sick frequently, it will have adverse effects on the development of the child.

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Research provides evidence that children who face adversities like poverty and deprivation early in life are more likely to experience a broad range of impairments later. These harsh circumstances can lead to social, emotional, behavioral, interpersonal or school-adjustment problems and even more severe difficulties, such as mental health problems, delinquency and criminal behavior.

It is not necessary that adverse childhood experiences that influence children's development are only one-time dramatic events.These can be daily routine events where children face chronic daily exposure to maltreatment, poor parenting and other adversities that damage developmental health of children.

Such situations can be avoided and the effects of early adversity can be moderated by a wide range of factors, from sensitive parenting, extended family support, counseling, provision of facilities, community-level social support and supportive childcare services.

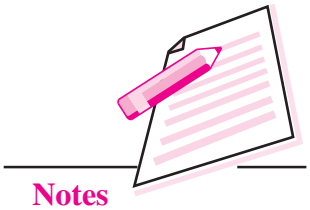
Individuals exposed to adverse childhood experiences tend to be less equipped to take on a parenting role when they are adults and, in the context of adverse circumstances and the absence of some form of social support and/or intervention, they are more likely to adopt inappropriate parenting behaviors and perpetuate a cycle of negative and adverse parenting across generations.

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING EARLY CHILDHOOD

Childhood is the time for children to be in school and at play, to grow strong and confident with the love and encouragement of their family and an extended community of caring adults. Childhood means much more than just the space between birth and the attainment of adulthood.It is a period of rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, social and language development of children. There are many social issues that affect children, such as education, bullying, child poverty, dysfunctional families, child labor, hunger, and child homelessness.

Childhood is usually a mixture of happiness, wonder,anxiety and resilience. It is generally a time of playing, learning, socialising and exploring in a world without much adult interference, aside from parents. It is a time of learning about responsibilities without having to deal with adult responsibilities.

Early childhood years are formative years in the growth and development of children when the foundation for lifelong development and learning is laid. A stimulating environment promotes holistic development comprising various domains namely, cognitive, language, social, emotional and physical competence which has already been discussed. Any long-term adverse circumstances negatively impact development.Childhood, family and the State are strongly interdependent,especially for disadvantaged groups. Poverty limits access, quality and family dynamics from gathering the best resources for children.



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2.4.1 Factors Affecting Childhood

Two major factors are nature or heredity and nurture or care. Let us study about these in brief.

Heredity

Physical characteristics are transmitted from parents to children through their genes. Children's physical appearance such as height, weight, body structure, the colour of the eye, the texture of the hair and to some extent intelligence and aptitudes depends on the parents. Children can also inherit diseases and condition from the parents such as heart disease, obesity which will affect growth and development. Intervention and environmental support can bring out the best in children.

Environment

Physical and psychological stimulation can play a significant role in the development of children. Physical surroundings giving positive modeling, as well as interactive social environment and loving relationships with family and peer are important environmental features that create aspiration among children. A good school and a loving family builds in children strong social and interpersonal skills, which will enable them to excel in academics and aspire to be useful citizens. This will, of course, be different for children who are raised in stressful environments.

Other factors which affect childhood are:

Exercise

Children need play and exercise to grow physically. Children need activity for their limbs and gain muscular strength and bone mass. Appropriate exercise keeps children fit, healthy and helps them reach proper milestones.

Sex of the child

Boys and girls grow differently. Much of their physical characteristics are through heredity but the rate of growth varies according to sex specially nearing puberty. Temperaments of boys and girls may also vary, making them show interest in different things.

Nutrition

The statistical presentation of the demography indicated that many children in India are undernourished and stunting and wasting are high. Balanced diet and the required quantity of food are required for children to grow, ward off disease and stay healthy. Nutritious food is crucial for children as they need energy to grow and repair. Malnutrition, especially absence of protein, can cause stunting.Overeating can cause obesity. A balanced diet that is rich in proteins, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates and fats is essential for the development of brain and body.

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Familial Influence

Love and responsive care are needed for social and emotional health. Adults whose presence is continuous and consistent encourage attachment and bonding. This interactive relationship contributes to psychological and social stability among children. In situations of stress, families may ignore or even abuse their children who then may become negative towards their social world. Too much attention with little freedom to explore also makes children submissive and dependent.

It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child. Families with an informal network of community or family assistance experience less child maltreatment. Emotional and verbal responsiveness of the mother, maternal involvement with the child, and provision of appropriate toys during the first two years are associated with increased cognitive development by the age of four years. Parental aggression, lack of maternal warmth and stressful events may cause behavioral problems.

Geographical Influences

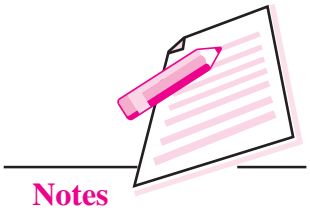
Neighborhoods play an important role in shaping children's interests and competence. Peers and community facilities are part of the everyday environment. Neighborhood parks make outdoor playpossible.Libraries or facilities for cultural activities develop skills and talents. Lack of child-oriented play spaces can force children to stay indoors and play video games.Thus, itis no surprise that children living in rural areas are often fast runners. Children living near forests are competent in describing local flora and fauna. Similarly, urban children have a greater propensity to talk about cars and other gadgets. It is up to the school and teacher to help children grow into well-rounded individuals.

Socio-Economic Status

The economic means and access to resources is determined by the socio-economic status of a family. Well-to-do families can access better schools with the possibility of providing support materials. Often, poverty is accompanied by illiteracy and absence of education can make families stick to less constructive beliefs. Poor working parents may not have access to quality childcare. It is the onus of the community to ensure good facilities for children.

Children experiencing long-term poverty exhibit poor attention span, poor retention power and more developmental delays compared to developmental delays in children experiencing short-term poverty.

Although nature contributes much to the growth and development of children, nurture contributes by how it interacts with nature. Helen Keller was born blind and mute but thanks to a dedicated teacher, went on to achieve world fame. Besides working on gaps as caregivers, ensure that children get enough rest every day, as development is heavily dependent on the amount of sleep and rest. Give attention to nutrition and exercise levels, as these too play an important role in promoting timely and healthy growth and development in children.



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2.5 FACTORS INFLUENCING CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Health is a mix of physical strength, alertness, emotional, mental and social wellbeing that enables us to live a full life. It is the absence of disease, and an active and functional being. We address children's illness by taking care of them.By immunising them against disease, we take preventive action to promote health. Play, aclean environment and responsive caregiving add to the children's overall health.

2.5.1 Hygiene (Self and Environmental)

Hygiene is the practice of keeping oneself and the surroundings clean to prevent illness or spread of disease. For environmental hygiene, we must ensure there is no stagnant water and drinking water is covered at home, in school or in the work place.

Personal hygiene includes washing hands after using the toilet, brushing teeth twice daily, bathing, washing hair, wearing clean clothes, cutting nails, covering the mouth while coughing, covering the nose while sneezing etc. Unhygienic conditions spread infection.

2.5.2 Sanitation Practices

Sanitation refers to public health conditions related to water and adequate treatment and disposal of excreta and sewage. Sanitation systems aim to protect human health by providing a clean environment that will stop the transmission of disease, especially through the fecal or oral route.

2.5.3 Nutrition

Food is needed to perform daily routine body functions, for its growth, fighting diseases, healing and maintenance. In case, there is nutritional deficiency for longer periods of time, it may affect the health and growth of the child. Statistics indicate that many children lack adequate nutrition. Good health is hugely dependent on children's intake of a balanced diet**.** A variety of foods in correct portions makes up nutrition for the child. Children need nutrients like proteins, carbohydrates, fat, minerals, vitamins, fibre and water. Age-wise dietary nutritional requirements guidelines are prescribed and are known as Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA). For example, the food and nutritional requirements during early childhood period are different to food intake and nutritional requirements of an adult. Hence, each age group has to take food and nutrition accordingly.

Malnutrition refers to the deficiencies or imbalances in an individual's intake of nutrients. It has two conditions.Under-nutrition results in stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and

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micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals), and overweight or obesity due to over-eating, which can lead to various diseases like heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer.

2.5.4 Immunization

Immunization, also popularly called vaccination, helps to protect us from getting any infectious disease. It helps us in controlling and eliminating infections. The most recent example is the elimination of polio. There are vaccinations available for different infections like, tetanus, BCG, OPV, hepatitis B, Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis (DPT), HiB, typhoid, rota virus, vitamin A and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) etc. These vaccines are to be administered at fixed timings to the pregnant woman, infants and children for which a schedule has been prescribed by the government. Parental awareness will help build a healthy nation. The benefits of immunization are not restricted to improvements in health and life expectancy of the individual only but also have social and economic impact at community and national levels.

2.5.5 Maternal Health

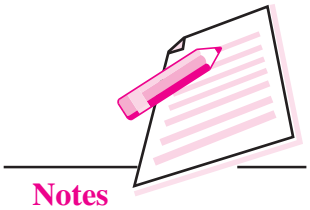
Maternal health affects children's health as healthy children are born to healthy mothers. Infants are dependent on mothers for complete diet in the first six months by intake of breast milk. Maternal health refers to the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period. While motherhood is often a positive and fulfilling experience, for many women it is associated with suffering, ill-health and even death. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), at least 20% of the disease burden in children under five yearsis related to problems in maternal health and malnutrition, as well as the quality of care at delivery and during the newborn period. Moreover, a baby whose mother dies during childbirth is less likely to survive, and children who lost their mothers are 10 times more likely to die within two years of the death of their mothers.

Mothers are most vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies during pregnancy and up to two years after childbirth. It is proven that nutrition interventions offer children the best chance to survive and reach optimal growth and development.After that the window closes, the damage to children is largely irreparable.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.2

Fill in the blanks.

(a) Malnutrition refers to the deficiencies or imbalances in an individual's intake of…….



(b) Sanitation systems aim to protect ……by providing a clean environment.

(c) Hygiene is the practice of keeping …….. and the ……..clean to prevent illness or spread of disease.

(d) Neighborhoods play an important role in shaping children's ……. and…….

(e) ……..and ……stimulation can play a significant role in the development of children.

2.6 CHILD VIS-A-VIS THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND PROVISIONS

The Constitution of India came into force on 26 January 1950. The Constitution establishes the basic rights and duties of the citizens of the nation. All citizens have to agree and abide by them. Given below are some of the constitutional provisions related to children and education.

To uplift disadvantaged sections, the Constitution of India, allows affirmative action through positive discrimination (reservations) in education and employment, which is based on caste plus socio-economic backwardness.These reservations are restricted to government run or government-aided institutions and not to the private sector.

Fundamental Rights

Article 14:	…shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
Article 15:	… shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. (3) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children. (4) Nothing … shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
Article 17:	"Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. …
Article 19:	(1) All citizens shall have the right – (a) to freedom of speech and expression; (b) to assemble peaceably and without arms; (c) to form associations or unions; (d) to move freely

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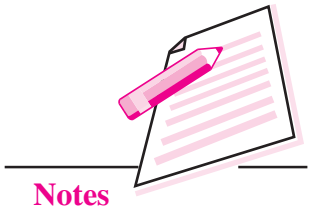
	throughout the territory of India; (e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India.
Article 21:	No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.
Article 21 A	… shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years…
Article 24	Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc. No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Directive Principles of State Policy

Article 39	… the tender age of children are not abused… are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength; (f) that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.
Article 42	The State shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (Children are also benefited by this statutory provision).
Article 45	The state shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory Education for All children until they complete the age of fourteen years.
Article 46	…shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes;…
Article 47	…raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health…
Article 51A	… (k) … parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3

Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
(i) Article 14	(a) raising of the level of nutrition
(ii) Article 45	(b) the tender age of children are not abused
(iii) Article 47	(c) prohibition of employment of children in factories
(iv) Article 39	(d) provide early childhood care and education
(v) Article 24	(e) shall not deny to any person equality

2.7 CHILD REARING PRACTICES IN INDIA

India is an ancient society with a cultural heritage of more than 5,000 years. It is a pluralistic, diverse country with diverse customs and beliefs about child-rearing practices throughout the country.

Child rearing practices are those practices which are grounded in cultural patterns and beliefs and are adopted by the parents and caregivers for the care and upbringing of the child.

Child rearing practices for a given time depends to a large degree on the child's developmental age and the health and nutritional risks the child is facing. There are traditional beliefs and practices that impact the mother's health and preparedness to give birth to a healthy infant.

At birth and during the first year of life, the child is at the greatest risk of mortality. That may be why there are so many beliefs and practices within traditional cultures that surround the birth of a child. It is recognised as a critical time for both the child and the mother. Where a period of confinement is a part of the tradition, it allows the mother time to recover physically and to bond with the child before she is required to assume her tasks. The negative side of this practice is that it may keep the mother from getting medical care that she requires.

During the post-partum and early infancy stages, the child is completely dependent on others for care. Generally, the mother is the primary caregiver, sometimes with considerable support from others and sometimes alone. She is responsible for providing all the things an infant needs: protection from physical danger; adequate nutrition and health care; an adult who can understand and respond to signals; things to look at, touch, hear, smell, and taste; opportunities to explore

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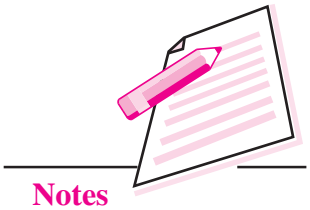
the world; appropriate language stimulation; and an adult with whom to form an attachment. The level of support the mother receives from others in the family and from society plays an important role in the kind of care she is able to provide during this time. Thus, the cultural patterns surrounding the role of the father, other family members and the community during this period is important for the child's survival and development.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Early childhood period is important as development takes place maximum during this period and foundation for holistic development is laid.
- Status and profile of young children in India including demographic profile, Infant Mortality Rate and Under Five Infant Mortality Rate (U5IMR).
- Factors affecting early childhood:
  - Heredity and environment
  - Exercise
  - Sex of the child
  - Nutrition
  - Familial Influence
  - Geographical Influences
  - Socio-Economic Status
  - Hygiene
  - Sanitation Practices
  - Immunization
  - Maternal Health
- Constitution of India lays emphasis on survival, development and protection of children. There are provisions in the Constitution either as a fundamental right or as Directive Principles of State Policy.To protect the discrimination arising from the caste, the Constitution of India prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Article 15); promotes equality of opportunity in public employment (Article 16); abolishes untouchability (Article 17) and protects the Scheduled Castes (SC),



Scheduled Tribes (ST) and other weaker sections from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46).

- Child rearing practices in India vary from state to state, culture to culture. These influence childhood, adolescence and the way these children parent as adults.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Highlight the meaning and significance of childhood.
2. What is the impact of early childhood on subsequent life?
3. Briefly explain the factors affecting childhood.
4. What is the constitutional view of childhood in India?
5. Comment on child rearing practices in India.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

2.1

(i) d, (ii) e, (iii) b, (iv) c, (v) f, (vi) a

2.2

(ii) Nutrients, (b) human health, (c) oneself, surroundings, (d) interests, competence, (e) Physical, psychological

2.3

(i) e, (ii) d, (iii)a, (iv) b, (v) c

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3

NEEDS AND RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

India has made significant commitments towards ensuring the basic rights of children. These are the right to survival, right to protection, right to development and right to participation. Presently, infant mortality rate is down, child survival rate is up, literacy rate has improved, and school dropout rate has fallen. Despite these achievements, there are gaps in terms of unmet needs due to which children feel neglected and vulnerable. They do not feel safe, protected and free. One reason may be that children and even adults are not aware of the needs and rights of children due to which they are not able to realize their strength and right approach to deal with vulnerability around them. There is a lot to know about child rights and government initiatives in this regard. Let us read about the needs of children and government initiatives towards children's rights.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the psychological, social, health and educational needs of children;
- describe how unmet needs impact the development of children;
- discuss the rights of children;
- describe the rights of children as per the United Nations Convention on theRights of the Child (UNCRC); and
- discuss rights of the girl child and CWSN.

Notes

3.1 NEEDS OF CHILDREN

You have studied in an earlier lesson the need and importance of providing stimulating experiences to promote the overall development of the child. Hence, parents and other caregivers are required to create a conducive environment and provide ample opportunities to children for their development and learning. During the process of growth and development, children have certain needs like psychological, social, health and educational which need to be timely fulfilled. A need can be defined as something that is essential for a person to lead a healthy and productive life. One should understand that there is a difference between *'needs'* and *'wants'*. The latter may be desirable but they are not essential for an individual. Let us study some of these needs.

3.1.1 Psychological Needs

(i) ***Security, safety and protection:*** Children need to grow up as positive-minded, happy, healthy and contributing citizens of the nation. For this, it is essential that they grow up in an environment where they feel physically, psychologically and emotionally safe and secure. When children feel safe and secure, they learn to trust other people and their environment. Children who do not feel safe and secure can become anxious, insecure and unhappy. This can affect their development, health and learning. Lack of safety may lead to issues of trust and attachment with others. Such children may grow up into socially maladjusted adults.

(ii) ***Love and affection***: Every child needs to be loved. The need for love and affection is the foundation for developing healthy relations and establishing trust with others. Children brought up in a caring and loving environment

Fig. 3.1 Love and affection between parents and child

grow up to be confident and socially well-adjusted individuals. On the other hand, children who do not receive such an environment feel lonely, ignored, lack initiative and are withdrawn. Unmet needs of love and affection lead to maladjustment due to the inability to connect emotionally with others.

(iii) ***Understanding and acceptance:*** Understanding and acceptance of the child by the parents and caregivers is another psychological need of children. A feeling of being valued, boosts the confidence of children.

Children's understanding about the self is formed on the basis of their daily life experiences and interactions within their families and communities. This includes their relationships with people, places and things and also the behavior and responses of others. Fulfillment of the above-mentioned psychological needs of children help develop a positive self concept. Hence, developing a positive self concept among children is a must for which, healthy family environment, supportive neighbourhood and positive school experiences are important. To fulfill the psychological needs of children, caregivers must ensure a safe, secure, loving environment in which they must call them by their names, greet them with a smile, praise and encourage them, and also support them in their day-to-day activities.

3.1.2 Need of Health and Nutrition Including Supplementary Nutrition

A healthy and happy childhood is the basis for a stable and strong adulthood. Foundation of good health is laid during the early years of life. Physical health is influenced by many factors, such as biology/ genes, and environmental factors like nutrition, immunisation, and opportunities for physical activities and exercise. Normal growth of children gets affected, if they do not get good nutrition and medical care during their early years. Lack of healthy and nutritious food may lead to poor growth and health problems like weakness, illness and diseases. This will further affect physical stamina and cognitive development of children. Parents and caregivers need be aware of the health and nutritional needs of children during these years. For this they should regularly monitor their child's health and physical development and take necessary measures.

Given below are a few guidelines to ensure the health and nutritional needs of children:

- Age appropriate gain in height and weight indicates normal health of children. Therefore, a monthly or at least a quarterly record of the height and weight of children may be maintained in a growth chart. If a child is losing or not gaining weight, the child should be shown to a doctor. The basic purpose of monitoring growth is to prevent malnutrition.
- Malnutrition occurs if the child does not get the right kind of food, i.e.,

a balanced diet. Every child must be given a nutritional supplement to avoid nutritional deficiencies in diet.

- Medical check-up of all children is a must at least once a year. It must be ensured that they have received the necessary immunization on time.

3.1.3 Play, Early Stimulation and Learning Needs

Play, early stimulation and opportunities for learning are yet another set of needs for the proper development of children. An environment that is full of praise and encouragement, opportunities to play, explore and experiment helps children grow and learn. Apart from this, playing provides children with an outlet for emotions. It helps develop imagination, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Through play, children also develop good relationships and learn to care and share. Lack of a stimulating environment and opportunities to learn through play may delay growth and development of children.

Children must be exposed to an enriching learning environment that provides opportunities for various age-appropriate activities and learning material. Free conservation, storytelling and rhymes contribute immensely in developing language, creativity and imagination which are essential for learning. Similarly, playtime is as important to their development as food and good care.

To sum up, we can say that all these needs are interrelated and interdependent on each other.

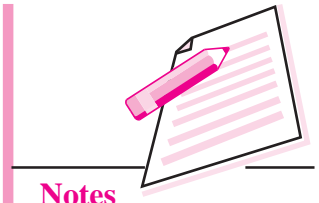
INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.1

Match Column A with Column B:

Column A	Column B
(i) Psychological needs	(a) Age and developmentally appropriate
(ii) Health and nutrition	(b) Love and affection
(iii) Stimulating environment	(c) Physical development
(iv) Activities	(d) Opportunities to play, explore and experiment

ACTIVITY 3.1

Interact with your neighborhood children about their needs and enlist their responses according to the categories of needs discussed above.



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3.2 RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

3.2.1 What are Children's Rights?

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 'children's rights' are the human rights of children primarily pertaining to the rights of protection and care to the minor. They are the minimum entitlements and freedom that should be accorded to all persons below the age of 18 regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability and therefore apply to all people everywhere.

3.2.2 Inter-relationship of Children's Needs and Children's Rights

All children have common needs irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural background. They need a protective home environment, good family life, adequate food, health care and respect. Children's needs should be fulfilled for their holistic development.

Needs and *'rights'* are mutually interdependent. '*Right*' is a recognition of children's entitlement to have their *'needs'* fulfilled. This, in turn, places specific obligations on adults at all levels of society to take the necessary action to ensure that those rights are implemented for every child.

Not all children are lucky to live a normal life. There are many children who live under difficult circumstances or in emergency situations. A big population of Indian children live in situations where their basic needs of food, shelter, education, medical care and protection etc. are not met. Due to this, they are at greater risk of suffering from malnutrition, illiteracy and ill health etc. Also, at times, children face emergency situations in their lives due to factors such as natural calamities (floods, earthquakes, fire etc.), accidents, loss of parents. Such children face a lot of hardships in their lives. Due to such circumstances and crises in their lives, these children suffer a lot of hardships and somewhere their childhood is lost.

3.2.3 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

On 20 November 1989, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child or United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. This Convention formulated the standards for physical, moral, mental, spiritual, and social development of children. India adopted the convention in December 1992. The Convention through its 54 Articles views the child as an individual entitled to a number of economic, civil, social, political and cultural rights wherever children are. It also describes how people and the government work jointly to make sure children enjoy all their rights. The right

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to Survival, Protection, Development and Participation form the core of the Convention. Let us know about these core rights.

- **Right to Survival:** The right to survival includes the right to life, the best attainable standards of health, nutrition and an adequate standard of living. It also includes the right to registration of birth, name and nationality.
- **Right to Protection:** The right includes freedom from all forms of exploitation, abuse, inhuman and degrading treatment including the right to special protection in the situations of emergency and armed conflicts. Protection against drug abuse, disease and disability and protection to children on the other side of the law also is an integral part of the right to protection.
- **Right to Development:** It consists of the right to be educated, to receive support for development and care during early childhood and to social security. It also includes the right to leisure, to recreation and to cultural activities.
- **Right to Participation:** The right to participation accords the child access to appropriate information and the freedom of thought and expression, conscience and religion.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.2

Answer the following questions:

(a) Write the full form of 'UNCRC': .....

(b) Write any two core rights of the child as per UNCRC.

1. ..... 2. .....

3.3 GOVERNMENT ACTS AND PLANS TO ACHIEVE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

A number of policies and plans were formulated for the welfare and development of children to ensure children's economic, political and social rights. Let us find out more about some of the flagship policies and plans.

3.3.1 Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) – An Integrated Scheme for School Education, 2018

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) or Integrated Scheme for School Education is an overarching programme for the school education extending from pre-school to class 12. Its main goal is to improve school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling to all children and equitable learning

outcomes. It subsumes three schemes: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). The scheme visualizes the 'school' as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to senior secondary levels. The vision of the Scheme is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from pre-school to senior secondary stage synchronized with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for Education. The major objectives of the Scheme are provision of quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students; bridging social and gender gaps in school education; ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education; ensuring minimum standards in schooling provisions; promoting vocationalisation of education; support States in the implementation of Right to Education; and strengthening and up-gradation of SCERTs/State Institutes of Education (SIEs) and DIETs as a nodal agencies for teacher training.

3.3.2 National Minimum Guidelines for Setting up and Running Crèches under Maternity Benefit Act, 2017

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has released National Minimum Guidelines for setting up and running crèches in 2018 under Maternity Benefit Act, 2017 mandating that "every establishment having 50 or more employees shall have the facility of crèche". These guidelines are meant to facilitate the employer in establishing and managing crèche facility for their employees having children mainly from 6 months to 6 years against key parameters such as location, timings, infrastructure, equipment, health and nutrition practices, safety and protection, trained human resource, parent's engagement and others, to ensure holistic development care of every child at the crèche.

3.3.3 The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017 has increased the duration of paid maternity leave available for female employees from 12 weeks to 26 weeks. The act extends the benefit to adopting and commissioning mothers and provides a woman who adopts a child will be given 12 weeks of paid leave from the date of adopting the child. The act is applicable to all those women employed in factories, mines and shops or commercial establishments employing 10 or more employees. The amended Act has mandated crèche facility for every establishment employing 50 or more employees. The women employees should be permitted to visit the creche. The Act has introduced a provision of "work from home" that can be exercised after the expiry of 26 weeks' leave period. Depending upon the nature of work, a woman can avail of this provision on such terms that are mutually agreed with the employer.

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3.3.4 Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016

Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in hazardous occupations identified in a list by the law and to regulate the services of children in non-hazardous occupations. It is aimed at banning the employment of children below 14 years of age, laying down a procedure to make additions to the schedule of banned occupations or processes, regulating the working conditions of children, laying down penalties for employment of children in violation of the provisions of this Act and other Acts which forbid the employment of children, and bringing uniformity in the definition of the child in related laws. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 introduced the concept of adolescent labour. An adolescent has been defined as a person between the ages of 14-18 years. The Act permits employment of adolescents except in hazardous occupation.

3.3.5 The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was enacted in 2016. It promotes and protects the right to equality, life with dignity and respect for integrity equally with others in various aspects of life such as educational, social, legal, economic, cultural and political. The Act elaborates on various kinds of entitlements to children with disabilities and gives directions to the appropriate governments for the education, skill development, employment, social security, health, rehabilitation, and recreation of such children. The types of disabilities has been increased from seven (The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995) to 21, with power to the Central Government to add more. Additional benefits such as reservation in higher education (not less than 5%) and government jobs (not less than 4%) have also been included.

3.3.6 National Plan of Action for Children, 2016

The National Plan of Action for Children, 2016 is committed to provide equal opportunities for all children and protect their rights. In order to build convergence and coordination among various sectors and levels of governance, the NPAC has identified the objectives and prepared plans in the form of strategies and action points under four Key Priority Areas mentioned in the National Policy for Children 2013 such as Survival, Health and Nutrition, Education and Development, Protection, and participation. This plan intends to provide comprehensive policy focus to address vulnerabilities of children. Vulnerable children includes socio-economically or otherwise disadvantaged groups, children with disabilities, street/homeless children, child labour/migrant

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children/trafficked children, children in conflict with the law, children affected or displaced by natural or man-made hazards and climate conditions/ civil disturbance, children without family support or in institutions and children affected by HIV/AIDs, leprosy etc.

Objectives of NPAC under each priority area

- **Survival, Health and Nutrition:** Ensure equitable access to comprehensive and essential preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative health care of the highest standard, for all children before, during and after birth, and throughout the period of their growth and development.
- **Education and Development:** Secure the right of every child to learning, knowledge, (including Skill Development) education, and development opportunity, with due regard for special needs, through access, provision and promotion of required environment, information, infrastructure, services and support for the development of the child's fullest potential.
- **Protection:** Create a caring, protective, and safe environment for all children, to reduce their vulnerability in all situations and to keep them safe at all places, especially public spaces.
- **Participation:** Enable children to be actively involved in their own development and in all matters concerning and affecting them.

Source: NPAC, 2016 pp 7

3.3.7 Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, 2015

Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao Scheme was launched in 2015 to address gender imbalance and discrimination against the girl child. The objectives are prevention of gender-biased sex-selective elimination, ensuring survival and protection of the girl child, and ensuring education and participation of the girl child. There is strong emphasis on changing the mindset through training, sensitization, and awareness generation. This scheme is being implemented through a national campaign and focussed multi-sectoral action in 100 selected districts low in CSR, covering all States/Union Territories. This is a joint venture of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development. In 2019, implementation guidelines for state governments / UT administrations were launched.

3.3.8 The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 creates a robust legal framework for the protection of the rights of all children whether alleged or found to be in conflict with law or children in need of care and protection, by catering to their basic needs through proper care, protection, development,

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treatment, social re-integration, by adopting a child- friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children and for their rehabilitation through processes provided, and institutions and bodies established therein which will adopt child friendly processes.

3.3.9 Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

Everyone has a role to play in protecting children. Parents, schools, communities, police, courts, medical professionals, NGOs, Child Welfare Committees, District Child Protection Units, the media among others are responsible for creating an environment in which children feel safe and protected. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 was enacted by the Government of India to provide an extremely strong legal framework for the protection of children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, while safeguarding the interest of the child at every stage of the judicial process, by incorporating child–friendly mechanisms for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and speedy trial of offences through designated Special Courts. The law defines a child as anyone below the age of 18 years and does not differentiate between a boy or girl child victim. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has been mandated to monitor the implementation of POCSO Act, 2012.

> The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was constituted in 2007 under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005. The Commission's mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programme, and Administrative Mechanisms and in consonance with Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. As defined by the commission, a child includes those up to the age of 18 years.

3.3.10 Regulatory Guidelines for Private Play Schools

The NCPCR has developed Regulatory Guidelines for Private Play Schools for children of the age of three to six years. The main objectives of the guidelines are to bring inclusiveness and uniformity in all educational institutions providing pre-school education, to prevent violation of child rights and abuse against such children, to achieve national and international commitment of pre-school education for preparing them for primary education and finally to remove ambiguity in the early childhood education (ECE) system in India by giving recognition for establishing or regulating such institutions.

3.3.11 Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), 2009

The Constitution of India provides free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of six to 14 years. 'Free education' means that no child shall

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be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent her/ him from pursuing and completing elementary education. 'Compulsory education' means it is the responsibility of the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide free elementary education and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in this age group. RTE provides for children's rights to an education that is free from fear, stress and anxiety. The draft of National Education Policy, 2019 recommends extending the sphere of RTE Act to include early childhood education and secondary school education. The proposed recommendation would extend the coverage of the Act to all the children between the ages of three to 18 years.

3.3.12 Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), 2009

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in 2009. It aimed at ensuring protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, and other vulnerable children. ICPS brings together multiple existing child protection schemes of the Ministry under one comprehensive umbrella, and integrates additional interventions for protecting children and preventing harm. ICPS, therefore, institutionalizes essential services and strengthens structures, enhances capacities at all levels, creates database and knowledge base for child protection services, strengthens child protection at family and community level, ensures appropriate inter-sectoral response at all levels. The scheme set up a child protection data management system to formulate and implement effective intervention strategies and monitor their outcomes. Regular evaluation of the programmes and structures are conducted and course correction is undertaken.

3.3.13 The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 came into force in 2007. The object of the Act is to prohibit solemnization of child marriage and connected and incidental matters. To ensure that child marriage is eradicated from society, the Government of India enacted the Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2006 by replacing the earlier legislation of Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929. This new Act is armed with enabling provisions to prohibit for child marriage, protect and provide relief to the victim and enhance punishment for those who abet, promote or solemnize such marriages. This Act also calls for the appointment of Child Marriage Prohibition Officer for whole or a part of a State by the State government.

3.3.14 Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994

Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (amended in 2002) was passed to stop female foeticide and control the declining sex ratio in the country. The Act banned the use of sex selection techniques before and

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after conception. The Act also bans advertisement related to pre-conception and pre-natal determination of sex. There is strong emphasis on changing mindset through training, sensitization and raising awareness.

ACTIVITY 3.2

- Visit nearby schools and discuss with teachers about child rights. Try to find out whether children are aware of their rights.
- Search on the Web and list down some NGOs working for the rights of the girl child and children from minority sections.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.3

1. Decode the following:

   a. MHRD : .....

   b. MWCD : .....

   c. NPAC : .....

   d. RTE : .....

   e. ICPS : .....

   f. SSA : .....

   g. RMSA : .....

2. Match Column A with Column B:

Column A		Column B	
i.	Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan	**a.**	Female foeticide
ii.	Maternity Benefit Act, 2017	**b.**	21 types
iii.	Rights of Persons with Disabilities	**c.**	POCSO
iv.	NCPCR	**d.**	Crèche
v.	Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act	**e.**	SSA, RMSA, Teacher Education

3. Read the section carefully and find out 'the word or words' used in the lesson to indicate the following:

   (a) The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017 has increased the duration of paid maternity leave available for female employees to ……..…… weeks from ……..…… weeks.

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(b) Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibits the employment of children below the age of …..…… years in hazardous occupations.

(e) ..... bans advertisement related to pre-conception and pre-natal determination of sex.

(f) …….. brings together multiple existing child protection schemes of the Ministry under one comprehensive umbrella.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt :

1. Needs of children
   - a. Psychological needs → Security safety and protection; Love and affection; Understanding and acceptance; Health
   - b. Health needs → Nutrition; Supplementary Nutrition
   - c. Early stimulation and learning needs
2. Impact of unmet needs on development of children.
3. Rights of children → Meaning of the Rights; Interrelationship of Needs and Rights
4. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
   - Right to Survival
   - Right to Protection
   - Right to Development
   - Right to Participation
5. Government Acts and plans to achieve children's rights
   - Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) – An Integrated Scheme for School Education, 2018
   - National Minimum Guidelines for setting up and running crèches under Maternity Benefit Act, 2017
   - The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017
   - Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016

- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016
- National Plan of Action for Children, 2016
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, 2015
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
- Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012
- Regulatory Guidelines for Private Play Schools
- Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), 2009
- Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), 2009
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Why should children be made aware about their rights?
2. Briefly discuss the effect of unmet needs on children's development.
3. Discuss rights of children as per UNCRC.
4. Discuss various initiatives taken by the government of India in the form of Acts and plans to achieve children's rights.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

3.1

(i) b, (ii) c , (iii) d, (iv) a

3.2

(a) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

(b) - Right to Survival

- Right to Protection
- Right to Development
- Right to Participation

3.3

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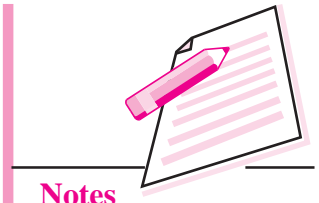

Notes

a. Ministry of Human Resource Development

b. Ministry of Women and Child Development

c. National Plan of Action for Children

d. Right to Education

e. Integrated Child Protection Scheme

f. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan

g. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan

2

(i) e

(ii) d

(iii) b

(iv) c

(v) a

3

a. 26, 12

b. 14

c. Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994

d. ICPS

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4

ECCE POLICIES, SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

Children are the future of our country. They are the responsibility of all the stakeholders viz. family, community, school and the government. It is well recognized that survival and development of children are dependent on what is planned and done for them. Ensuring access by all children to quality care and early childhood development is a priority. The Governmentof India has initiated and implemented many policies, schemes and programmes to cater to the welfare of all children. These initiatives serve as pathways for creating a conducive environment and facilitating children during their early stages of development and learning.

In this lesson, you will study some of policies, schemes and programmes that have been implemented so far for the holistic development and wellbeing of children.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the need for government initiatives for ECCE;
- discuss major policies related to ECCE; and
- describe various schemes and programmes of ECCE.

4.1 NEED FOR GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR ECCE

All children must have access to opportunities of healthy development and learning in a safe and conducive environment. Not only in India but the world over, people have realized the significance of early years in the rapid development of children in all domains. At the national and international levels, several

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initiatives have been taken to ensure children's right to survival, development, protection and participation. The Government of India is one the most important stakeholders in ensuring quality ECCE to children. India has been signatory to many conventions to ensure needs and rights of children are respected and provided to them.Over the years, the government has formulated many policies and schemes to raise the quality of services provided to children.

Let us study some of the Government initiatives in this direction.

4.2 POLICIES AND PLANS

In Article 39, the Constitution of India provides that the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring "that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment."

To ensure survival, health, nutrition, care and education of young children in the early years, various interventions are done at the national, state and district levels from time to time.

4.2.1The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986

The Government of India had formulated the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 to promote education for the welfare of all its citizens. The policy focuses on the overall development of young children and visualizes ECCE as an important factor strengthening primary education in the country. The policy also considers ECCE as important for human resource development. It stresses on promoting a child-centred and play-based ECCE programme. It discourages the use of formal methods and introduction of the 3Rs at an early stage. It also recommends the involvement of the local community in the ECCE programmes.

4.2.2 National Nutrition Policy, 1993

Adequate and healthy nutrition is vital for holistic development of children. The policy was formulated by the Government of India to tackle the problem of under-nutrition and malnutrition in the country, thereby aiming to improve the nutritional status across society. The policy states the need to expand Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and other similar programmes in order to cover the entire population of children in India. It implies that mothers be given proper support and information on effective nutrition for the growth of their children. The policy also calls on state governments to take concerted efforts and recommends the setting up of State Level Nutrition Council for improving the nutritional standards.

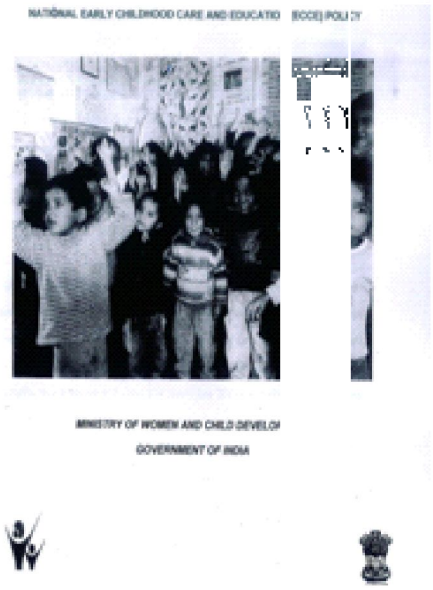
Notes

4.2.3 The National Policy for Children (NPC), 2013

The Government of India adopted the first National Policy for Children (NPC) in 1974 asone of the major initiativesfor the wellbeing of children. The policy declared children as, "supremely important asset" for the nation. The NPC, 1974 was revised in 2013, reaffirming commitment to healthy development and protection of all children. NPC, 2013 identifies survival, health, nutrition, development, education, protection and participation as the undeniable right of every child and the key priority. The policy also directs states to take all necessary measures to provide universal and equitable access to ECCE for optimal development of all children.

4.2.4 National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013

The Government of India approved the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy in 2013. The Policy framework also includes the National ECCE Curriculum Framework and Quality Standards for ECCE.



The Policy commits to universal access to quality early childhood education to all children under six years of age. The vision of the policy is to,"achieve holistic development and active learning capacity of all children below six years of age by promoting free, universal, inclusive, equitable, joyful and contextualised opportunities for laying foundation and attaining full potential."

Access with equity and inclusion, improving quality, strengthening capacity, research and documentation and advocacy and awareness generation are the key areas of the policy.

The policy recognizes that young children are best cared for in their family environment and thus strengthening family capabilities to care for and protect the child will receive the highest priority.

4.2.5 The National Health Mission (NHM)

The National Health Mission was launched in 2013. The NHM envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable and quality health care services that are accountable and responsive to people's

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needs. The main programmatic components include Health System Strengthening, Reproductive-Maternal-Neonatal-Child and Adolescent Health, and Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases.

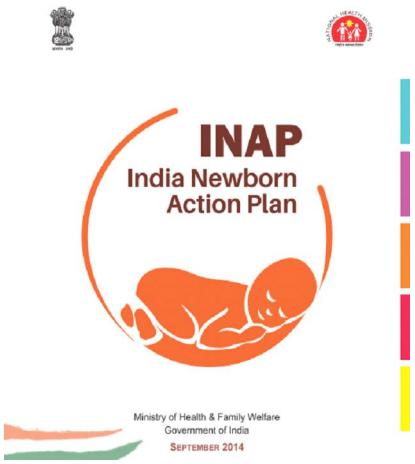
ECCE in the 12th Five Year Plan(2012-17)

The Five Year Plans have also acknowledged the importance of ECCE for laying the foundation of lifelong development. The 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) emphasizes the need to address areas of systemic reform in ECCE across all channels of services in the public, private and voluntary sectors. It aimed to redefine ICDS non-formal preschool education to ECCD, with additional and trained human resources. It also calls for introduction of a developmentally appropriate curriculum framework with joyful early learning methodologies for children between three and six years of age, including school readiness interventions for children who are five plus years of age.

Source:https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/XIIFYP_SocialSector.pdf

4.2.6 India Newborn Action Plan (INAP), 2014

The India Newborn Action Plan (INAP) was launched in 2014 to reduce preventable newborn deaths and stillbirths in the country with strategic interventions. It defines six pillars of interventions:



- Pre-conception and antenatal care;
- Care during labour and childbirth;
- Immediate newborn care;
- Care of healthy newborn;
- Care of small and sick newborn; and
- Care beyond newborn survival

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. There are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries —developed and developing —in a global partnership.

Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education**: "**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality educationand promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

Goal 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 adopted by Government of India states, "by 2030 to ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education".

Source :sustainabledevelopment.un.org

4.2.7 National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC), 2016

The National Plan of Action for Children 2016 succeeds the Plan of Action adopted in 2005. NPAC, 2016 focuses to reach and serve the 'Last Child First'. It commits to give first rank to children who are most vulnerable due to gender, socio-cultural and economic or geographic exclusion, including other vulnerable children such as street children, children of migrant workers, sex workers and those suffering from HIV/AIDS or other diseases.

The NPAC, 2016 targets to ensure all children their right to survival, dignity, health, nutrition, education, development, protection and participation. It also provides a framework for the states and Union Territories to develop their own state plans to protect children's rights and promote their development.

The plan also takes into cognizance the importance of strengthening the communities and families to support children and to ensure their overall survival, well-being, protection and development.

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4.2.8 National Health Policy (NHP), 2017

The National Health Policy (NHP) was formulated in 1983 and 2002. The latest NHP was launched in 2017. The main aim of this policy is to shape health systems in this area such as investments in health, organization of healthcare services, prevention of diseases and promotion of good health. It seeks to enable access to technologies, developing human resources, encouraging medical pluralism, building knowledge base, developing better financial protection strategies, strengthening regulation and health assurance.

The policy aims the attainment of the highest possible level of health and wellbeing for all at all ages and universal access to good quality health care services.

4.2.9 National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyan), 2018

POSHAN Abhiyan was launched in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan in March 2018 with a vision to ensure India is free of malnutrition by 2022. It aims:

- to reduce the level of under-nutrition and other related problems by ensuring convergence of various nutrition related schemes.
- prevent stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and low birth rate.

It also aims to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.1

Fill in the blanks:

(a) The National Plan of Action for Children 2016 focuses to reach and serve to the……..…..

(b) POSHAN Abhiyan aims to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by.....

(c) The India Newborn Action Plan aims to reduce preventable ..... and..... in the country.

(d) The National Policy for Children, 2013 declared children as ..... for the nation.

(e) The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013 seeks to achieve ..... development and ..... capacity of all children below six years of age.

4.3 PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES

The concern for the health and general well being of the mother and the child has motivated the government to launch programmes and schemes from time to time to address this need.

Let us study some of the schemes.

4.3.1 Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, 1975

The Government of India launched the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme in 1975. It is a unique programme and one of the world's largest for early childhood care and development. It encompasses all children in the age group of 0-6 years. It also caters to the needs of pregnant women and lactating mothers. The scheme covers six services, namely:

(i) Supplementary nutrition;

(ii) Pre-school non-formal education;

(iii) Nutrition and health education;

(iv) Immunization;

(v) Health check-up; and

(vi) Referral services.

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The objectives of the Scheme are to:

- improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group of 0-6 years;
- lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

4.3.2 Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), 1995

Mid Day Meal Scheme was launched in 1995 to improve the nutritional status of children studying in primary classes in Government, Government aided, local body schools, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centres all over the country. It aims at enhancing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children. In October 2007, the Scheme was extended to cover children of upper primary classes i.e. class VI to VIII as well.

मध्याह्न भोजन योजना
Mid-day Meal Scheme

4.3.3 Janani SurakshaYojana (JSY)

Janani SurakshaYojana (JSY) was launched on 12 April 2005. It is a safe motherhood intervention under the National Health Mission. It aims to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among poor pregnant women.

4.3.4 Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

The Government of India launched Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram in 2011to provide completely free and cashless services to pregnant women and sick newborns in government health institutions in both rural and urban areas.

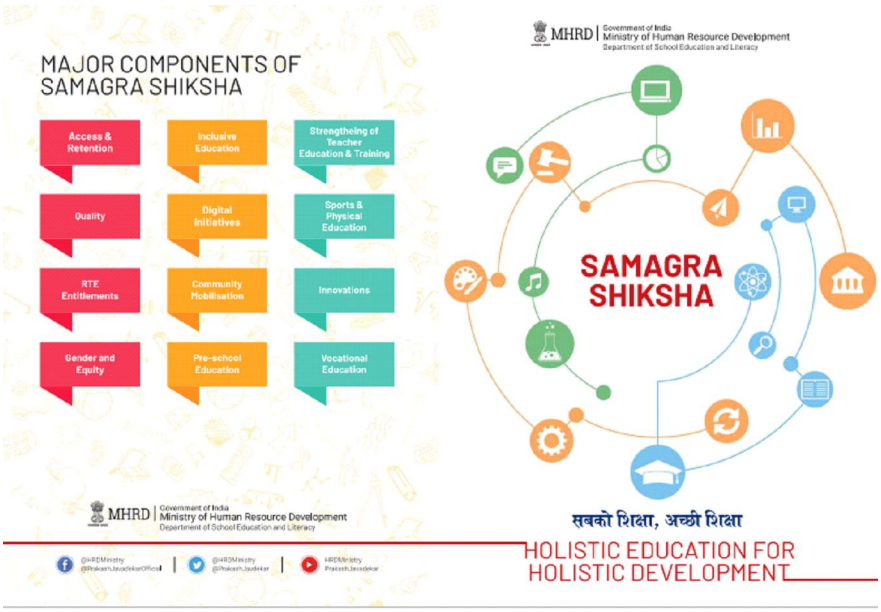
4.3.5 Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)

The Government of India launched the RashtriyaBalSwasthyaKaryakram (RBSK), an innovative initiative under the National Health Mission.It envisages Child Health Screening and Early Intervention Services, which is a systemic approach of early identification and link to care, support and treatment. It includes early detection and management of a set of 30 health conditions prevalent in children less than 18 years of age. These conditions are broadly: Defects at birth, Diseases in children, Deficiency conditions and Developmental delays including Disabilities or the 4Ds. Child Health Screening and Early Intervention Services also aims at reducing the extent of disability, at improving the quality of life and enabling all persons to achieve their full potential.

4.3.6 Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), 2009

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) targeted at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children.

4.3.7 Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), 2018



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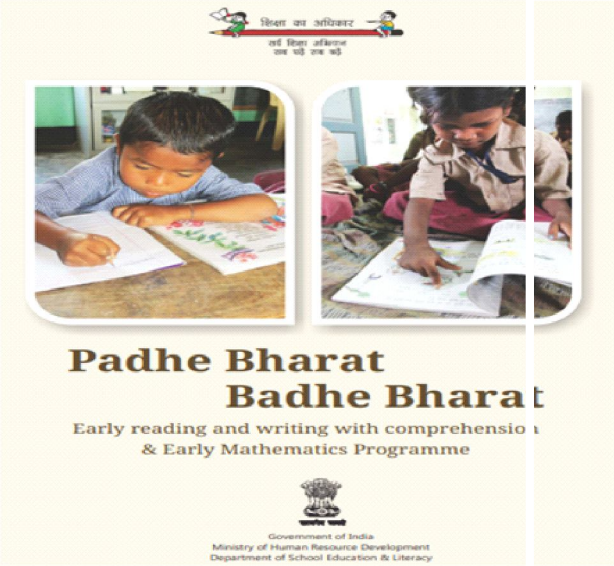
The Government of India launched Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan in 2018 for school education extending from pre-school to class 12. It envisages the school as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to senior secondary levels. It aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from preschool to senior secondary stage. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan recognizes the need and importance of pre-school education and is recognized as a critical component of the existing Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat programme. The scheme emphasises safe and secure infrastructure including sanitation facilities in preschools.It also stresses on developmentally appropriate curriculum, learning activities, pedagogical practices and assessment and professional development of teachers and community participation and engagement.

Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat

Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat Scheme was launched by Government of India in 2014 to improve and promote the foundational learning of early language and literacy and early numeracy in early grades of primary school particularly classes I and II.

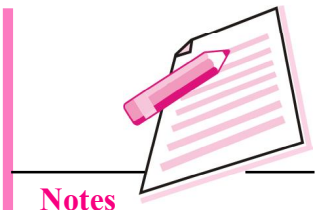

Padhe Bharat
Badhe Bharat
Early reading and writing with comprehensio
& Early Mathematics Programme
Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education & Literacy

4.3.8 Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers

Rajeev Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers was launched by the Government of India to help establish crèchesand provide quality daycare facilities for children of working mothers among all socio-economic groups in both in the organized and unorganised sectors.It offers care and education services for children below six years of age.

4.3.9 National Minimum Guidelines for Setting up and Running Crèches under Maternity Benefit Act 2017

The Government of India prepared National Minimum Guidelines for Setting



up and Running Crèches under Maternity Benefit Act 2017. Under the Act, the crèche facility is mandatory for every establishment employing 50 or more employees.

It provides guidelines for setting up and running crèches forchildren between six months to six years and to standardize the quality of these crèches. It has spelt out key parameters of locations, timings, infrastructure, equipment, health and nutrition practices, safety and protection, trained human resource, parent's engagement and others to ensure holistic development and care of every child at the crèche.These guidelines are based on the scientific principles of early childhood developmentand attempt to meet the best interests of young children and their parents.Some of the norms are categorized as non-negotiable while others are preferable norms which can be reviewed and adapted as per the need and situation.

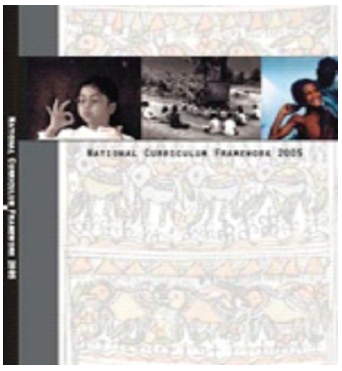
4.4 CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

Certain government bodies have been assigned the responsibility of designing and formulating curriculum frameworks to guide educational institutions with regard to content, pedagogy and outcomes of the curriculum for a particular grade and area of study.

Curriculum framework can be described as comprehensive and organised guidelines or a set of standards guiding all the learning experiences to be given to children at a particular stage to attain the desired learning outcomes. It provides guidelines about what and how to be taugh to children including assessment procedures.

Let us study about the curriculum frameworks related to ECCE.

4.4.1 National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005



National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) prepares the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) which provides the framework for curriculum development and teaching practices for school education programmes in India. In the context of ECCE, the framework advocates that young children be provided care, opportunities and experiences for their holistic development including physical, cognitive, social and emotional. It considers ECCE as preparation for formal schooling and advocates play based developmentally appropriate curriculum in ECCE.

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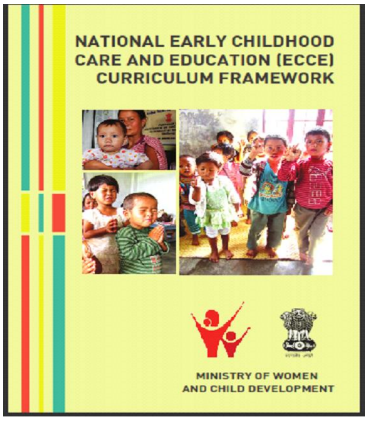
4.4.2 National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Curriculum Framework, 2013



National Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Framework 2013 is a significant and comprehensive guiding document. It aims to promote quality and excellence in early childhood care and education throughout the country. It intends to provide rich early stimulation and quality learning experiences to all children from birth to pre-primary years. It emphasizes children's holistic development and learning. It aims at creating an enabling environment and providing need based inputs as per children's developmental and contextual needs. The Framework also acknowledges the importance of involvement of parents, family and community in ensuring quality ECCE.

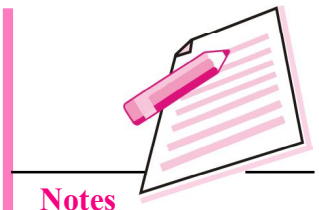
INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.2

State whether the following statements are true or false.

1. Rajeev Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers aims to establish crèches and provide quality daycare facilities for children of working mothers.
2. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan encompasses education extending from preschool to degree level.
3. National Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Framework aims to promote quality and excellence in ECCE.
4. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme was launched by the Government of India in 1979.
5. National Minimum Guidelines for Setting up and Running Crèches were formulated to set up and run crèches for children between six months to six years.

4.5 VARIOUS SERVICE PROVIDERS OF ECCE

In India, ECCE programmes are being delivered by various organizations across government, private and non-governmental sectors. Let us study about them.



4.5.1 Government Sector

As you have read in the previous section, the Government of India has taken several initiatives to provide care, health, nutrition and learning experiences and education to all young children. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme introduced in 1975 is one of the world's largest programmes mandated to provide ECCE. In the previous sections of this lesson, you have studied about the services and objectives of the ICDS. These services are provided through centres called Anganwadi. These centres aim to provide a stimulating and enriched environment to children for their holistic development.

4.5.2 Private Sector

The private sector is also one of the service providers of ECCE. It includes stand-alone pre-schools, self-owned preschools and franchises.The outreach of these schools is steadily spreading even into the rural areas across the country. The quality of services provided by them varies which needs to be regulated.

4.5.3 Non-Government Sector

The ECCE services are also being provided by voluntary or Non-Governmental Organisations. These are largely run by trusts, societies, religious groups and funded by government and international funding agencies. Their outreach and the types of services provided by them also vary.

There is a need to harmonise the activities of all these service providers. The concerned authorities must ensure that they work in accordance with the service delivery norms, standards and regulations of the state.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Various policies and plans formulated by the Government of India for ensuring quality early childhood care and education to all children of the country. These interventions aim to improve the quality of health, nutrition, care and education provided to young children in the early years.
- The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 focuses on the overall development of young children and visualizes ECCE as an important factor strengthening primary education in the country.
- National Nutrition Policy, 1993 was formulated by the Government of India to address to the problem of under-nutrition and malnutrition in the country.
- The National Policy for Children (NPC), 2013 reaffirms commitment to healthy development and protection of all children. It identifies survival,

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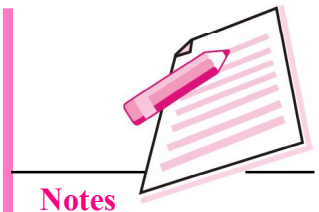
health, nutrition, development, education, protection and participation as the undeniable right of every child.

- National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013 commits to universal access to quality early childhood education to all children under 6 years of age. The vision of the policy is to 'achieve holistic development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age by promoting free, universal, inclusive, equitable, joyful and contextualised opportunities for laying foundation and attaining full potential'.
- National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC), 2016 targets to ensure all children their right to survival, dignity, health, nutrition, education, development, protection and participation.
- National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyan) was launched in in 2018 with a vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022.
- The National Health Mission (NHM) envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable and quality health care services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.
- National Health Policy (NHP), 2017 aims to shape health systems in the areas such as investments in health, organization of healthcare services, prevention of diseases and promotion of good health.
- India Newborn Action Plan (INAP), 2014 was launched in 2014 to reduce preventable newborn deaths and stillbirths in the country with strategic interventions.
- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Schemewas launched in 1975 is a unique programme for early childhood care and development for all children in the age group of 0-6 years. The scheme covers supplementary nutrition, pre-school non-formal education, nutrition and health education, immunisation, health check-up and referral services as its services.
- Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), 2009 targeted at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children.
- Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) targeted to improve the nutritional status of children studying in primary and upper primary classes in Government, Government aided, local body schools, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centres all over the country.
- Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan was launched in 2018 for the school education extending from preschool to class 12. It aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from preschool to senior secondary stage.
- Rajeev Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers helps to establish crèches and provide quality daycare facilities for children of working mothers.



- National Minimum Guidelines for Setting up and Running Crèches under Maternity Benefit Act 2017 were prepared to set up and run crèches for children between six months to six years.
- National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 emphasises that young children be provided care, opportunities and experiences for their holistic development.
- National Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Framework 2013 provide guidelines to promote quality and excellence in ECCE. It intends to provide rich early stimulation and quality learning experiences to all children from birth to pre-primary years for their holistic development and learning.
- There are various service providers in ECCE-government, private and the non-governmental sector. There is a need to harmonise the activities of all these ECCE service providers, in accordance with norms, standards and regulations.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. List various policies and programmes related to ECCE in the country.
2. What do you understand by curriculum framework? Comment on National Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework, 2013.
3. Briefly explain the various service providers of ECCE.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

4.1

(a) Last Child First

(b) 2022

(c) newborn deaths, stillbirths

(d) supremely important asset

(e) holistic development, active learning

4.2

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. False 5. True

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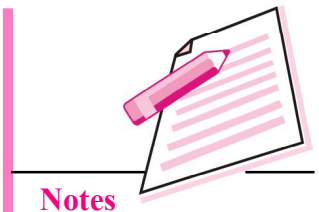

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ISSUES AND DIRECTIONS IN ECCE

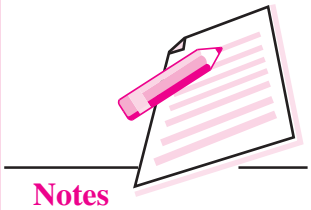
Early childhood is a significant period which sets the base for later learning and development. During this time, the experiences and opportunities provided to children influence their development, especially that of the brain. So, ensuring access to quality and equitable early care and education becomes imperative.

The Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 also encourages the provision of at least one year of free and compulsory quality preschool education for all children. With this view, access to equitable and early investment in quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services and programmes became vital in India. The initiatives taken by the Government of India clearly reflect the influence of and adherence to this global ECCE commitment. Recently, an all India educational survey conducted by the NCERT and NUEPA indicate the constant increase in the accessibility of ECCE services to all children. However, the surveys reveal that the quality of ECCE is at risk especially the education component for the age group of three to six years. The reasons behind them are the lack of age and developmentally appropriate curriculum, facilities, infrastructure, teaching learning material, resources, funds, qualified and trained teachers, standard assessment system, and convergence. Apart from this, predominance of formal teaching and rote memorization, inadequate attention to classroom arrangement and display, ignorance of age and developmental needs and capabilities of children, lack of community ownership, lack of hygienic and healthy habits etc. are critical issues. These need to be attended to and rectified at individual, institutional and government levels.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the issues in ECCE; and
- discuss the directions to address the issues in ECCE.



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5.1 ISSUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATI

There are some critical issues which are not appropriately addressed, may be because we have compromised with the quality standards for ECCE both at the individual or the government level. These are not being addressed during planning, implementation and monitoring of the ECCE programmes. Let us study some of these issues in detail:

5.1.1 Process of Admission

There is not much clarity and transparency on the process of admission of children in ECCE centres in terms of date of admission, age for admission and correct admission procedure. It is observed that children are also being enrolled in preschools through formal tests especially in metropolitan and other big cities. This is being practiced perhaps due to the large number of applicants seeking admission in preschools. Such practices lead to rejection of children which may destroy their self-confidence and self-esteem at this tender age.

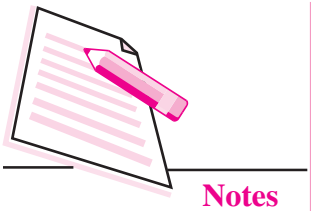
5.1.2 Infrastructure, Material and Classroom Environment

ECCE centres are lacking in age and developmentally appropriate equipment and play materials. Mostly, these are inadequate for the number of children enrolled in ECCE centres. The play material provided does not meet the criteria prescribed and are also not well maintained. In some cases, these materials are not safe and are not even appropriately used by the teachers. Apart from this, the classroom environment does not provide opportunities to the children to manipulate and explore the material for learning.

5.1.3 Teachers

Qualified and well - trained teachers are vital for the successful implementation of an ECCE programme. Issues with the teachers pertain to their qualification, appointment, salary and training/ capacity building. There are variations in the qualification of ECCE teachers appointed. They may be possessing Nursery Teachers Training (NTT) or Bachelors in Education (B.Ed.). Pre-service training courses such as NTT, diploma/ certificate courses are being run by the unregulated institutions mushrooming everywhere. Similarly, some regulated institutes are running various types of ECCE/NTT courses of varied duration not recognized by the appropriate authority. In-service training of teachers is one of the vital but neglected and underdeveloped area in the whole country. There are no provisions for capacity building of in-service ECCE teachers to help keep them abreast with the latest developments mainly with regard to the use of technology and teaching learning process.

Also, there are variations in pay norms for ECCE teachers and most are under-



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paid. Most of the ECCE centres are overcrowded and have only one teacher in each class.

5.1.4 Teaching Learning Process

Teaching learning process in ECCE centres must be play and activity based. However, most centres adopt formal teaching methods, especially in the private sectors. Such methods provide very less scope for children to ask questions, experiment, explore and participate. Thus, making children only a passive recipient of information being provided by the teacher curbs their imagination and creative thinking skills.

Children learn best in their mother tongue. Despite knowing this, most ECCE centres use English to teach and interact with children. Due to this, children hardly find the opportunity to interact and express themselves freely.

Huge, boring and age- inappropriate homework provided by the preschools that burdens children is another significant issue. Children become pressurised and this practice robs the freedom of a child at home. Sometimes, this pressure is transferred to the parents as well.

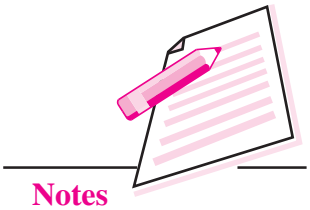
Most ECCE centres do not follow appropriate assessment procedures for assessing children and their progress is invariably recorded through standardized tests and interviews.

5.1.5 The Curriculum

The curriculum consists of all kinds of experiences planned to be organised for young children keeping in mind their characteristics, needs and development. Presently, there is no set curriculum for ECCE. However, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has developed a curriculum framework for ECCE which places children at the centre of teaching learning process and has suggested the play way approach for organising learning experiences of young children. Despite the availability of such guidelines, most ECCE centres are still struggling to align their pedagogy with this curriculum framework.

5.1.6 Inclusion and Gender Equality

Inclusion and gender equality are issues which need to be addressed at an early stage of life. An inclusive preschool environment consists of an equitable and respectable environment for all children despite the existing differences among them. This kind of environment is essential for children to develop positive self-identities and a sense of belongingness. Also, formation of gender identity develops during the early childhood period. The teachers are generally not aware or trained to handle gender and inclusion issues during this period.



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Concerted efforts at the government level and at the level of the ECCE centre are required to build an accessible and respectful environment for all children.

5.1.7 Administrative/ Management Issues

Administrative/ management issues are critical to the development and sustainability of an ECCE centre. These issues encompass the following:

- **Monitoring and Supervision:** Monitoring and supervision system is most important aspect of the management/administration of an ECCE centre. However, it is also one of the weakest dimensions of ECCE programmes. There is no clear monitoring and supervision mechanism for ensuring the quality of ECCE centres at macro and micro level. The stakeholders such as teachers, parents, policy makers, educational planners and administrators are not aware of these mechanisms and their role at different levels. Hence, they are not able to contribute to the provision of quality ECCE centres.
- **Regulatory Framework:** In order to ensure the quality of existing ECCE centres and to prevent mushrooming of unregulated ECCE centres, which do not meet the minimum standards of quality ECCE, a robust regulatory framework is imperative. However, there is no well-defined regulatory framework available both at the national and the state level. Some states have developed their state specific regulatory framework which may not be applicable in the context of other states. However, it is encouraging to know that the MWCD has constituted National ECCE Council though not functional but it is a step in the right direction.
- **Convergence/Coordination:** There is a lack of a strong and consistent convergence/ coordination between governments leading to uncertainty about their roles and responsibilities. Similarly, different ministries and institutions address different needs of the children related to their education, care, health and safety. Thus, there is a strong need to build a strong and consistent convergence and coordination between institutions, concerned ministries and governments for different programmes and services for children.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.1

Match column A with column B

Column *A*	Column *B*
(i) Convergence/coordination	a) Qualified and trained
(ii) Play materials	b) Play and activity based

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(iii) Teaching learning process	c) Quality ECCE programmes
(iv) Regulatory framework	d) Adequate
(v) ECCE teachers	e) Ministries and Governments

ACTIVITY 5.1

Discuss with parents in your neighborhood the issues and challenges being faced by them with respect to the education of their young children.

5.2 DIRECTIONS TO RESOLVE ISSUES

Till now, we have discussed some of the issues pertaining to various aspects of ECCE. Though these issues exist, it is possibile to address them through combined efforts of all the stakeholders. These efforts will ensure accessibility of quality ECCE programmes to all children. In this context, some guidelines are given below as workable solutions to address the above mentioned issues.

5.2.1 Process of Admission

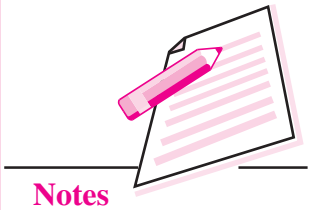
The date of admission, age of admission and process of enrolling children in a preschool differ from state to state. However, children are ready to enter a preschool programme on completion of three years of age by 31 March of an academic year. That is when children can handle anxiety of separation from family, develop some verbal competence, communicate basic needs and are toilet trained.

Further, there should be no use of evaluation/ interview/ interaction of children and parents at the time of admission as assessment tool for entry in a preschool. In order to save young children from the anxiety created though such tests, it is imperative to abolish the admission test. Some alternative methods such as first come first served basis or a randomized lottery system may be used for enrolling children.

Admission to children should not be denied on the grounds of religion, region, caste, race, sex, disability and socio-economic status of the family. Preference should be given to children living in the neighborhood.

5.2.2 Infrastructure, Material and Classroom Environment

The preschool centres must ensure safe and adequate indoor and outdoor space. A minimum of 300/450 sq. meters of outdoor space and 35 sq meters indoor space should be provided for a group of 25 children. The space must be



equipped with adequate number of age and developmentally appropriate teaching learning material. It should have adequate light, ventilation, safe drinking water, clean and child- friendly toilets. Provision of activity areas such as dolls, science, dance/ music, art etc. should be made. All these facilities should also accommodate children with disabilities.

5.2.3 Teachers, Qualification, Capacity Building and Salary

A teacher who has passed class XII and has a two year diploma in preschool education recognized by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) must be appointed as a preschool teacher. All State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) must start pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes in all the states/ UTs. During their capacity building, teachers must be oriented about new developments and initiatives in ECCE.

> The Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is a statutory body established by the Government of India on 17 August, 1995. Its mandate is to develop and maintain the quality of teacher education system in the country, mainly through, regulation and maintenance of norms and standards. It has developed the curriculum for two years Diploma in Preschool Education (DPSE) and related norms and standards to regulate them.

The pay norms of ECCE teachers may be reviewed. The teachers must be paid well to attract committed and talented teachers. The salary of preschool teachers may be made at par with the salary of primary school teachers.

Maintaining teacher-child ratio is very important at preschool level because young children need more attention from adults. A fair teacher-child ratio contributes to better interaction between teacher and children. Thus, an appropriate teacher- child ratio i.e at least one teacher with a helper for 20-25 children of ages three to six years must be maintained.

5.2.4 Teaching Learning Process

a. Creating learning environment

A conducive classroom environment catering to the needs and interest of young children is an important factor leading to their engagement in the ECCE programmes and activities. Therefore, it is vital to pay attention to classroom environment and setting. Different activity areas must be designed in a way so as to provide ample opportunities to the children to explore the areas of their interest on a regular basis. Arrange the spaces to allow children to work individually, in small groups, or in large groups. Make sure that all equipment

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and materials in classroom are functional, easily accessible and safe. The classroom setting must promote interaction and encourage children to share, cooperate and help each other.

b. Method of teaching and instruction

All the teaching learning process should be child -centred. The preschools must avoid formal system of teaching learning and thus should discourage rote memorisation. The learning experiences must be built around play, activities, experimentation and exploration. Children should be actively engaged in the process of learning. Children should be given ample opportunities to satisfy their curiosity and nurture their creativity, while teachers need to plan age and developmentally appropriate activities and material to facilitate learning.

c. Language of instruction

Language of instruction in an ECCE centre must be the mother tongue. If there are children who speak mother tongue or the local dialect, the teacher must allow the use of as many languages as possible. This would help children express themselves, participate and learn from each other.

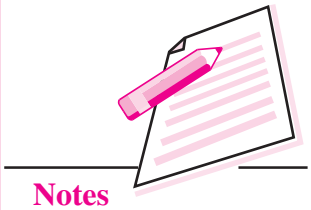
While promoting the mother tongue, teachers should provide exposure to school language to prepare children for later schooling. Hence, children should be encouraged to be proficient in their home language or mother tongue first, and then the school language may be introduced.

d. Homework

Any kind of homework, especially written work, must be discouraged at the preschool level and at the early primary stage (classes I and II). However, children may be given some of the activities to do at home in consonance with the activities already done in the preschool to reinforce learning. Parents who demand homework must be made aware of the adverse effects of homework on children.

e. Assessment

Children's progress should be assessed in a non-threatening manner on a regular and comprehensive basis through daily observation, play activities, interactions and anecdotes. These must be recorded or documented regularly. The assessment should be formative with a view to reinforce and enable the child to develop optimally. No child should be subjected to any formal tests or examinations, either written or oral. Assessment shall also be used for early identification and diagnosis of disabilities or developmental challenges in children.



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5.2.5 Curriculum

The curriculum must provide age- and- developmentally appropriate learning experiences and opportunities to children so that they can understand themselves and the environment, think critically and solve their day-to-day problems. The curriculum must be play- based, ensure continuous learning, provide opportunities for interaction, ensure involvement of children and promote use of indigenous material; and offer pedagogy covering all domains of development. It should also respect the uniqueness, diversity of experiences and local-specific contexts of children. In the curriculum, the emphasis must be given on concrete experiences through interaction with and exploration of the environment, both physical and socio-cultural.

5.2.6 Inclusion and Gender Equality

Diversity in the classroom must be respected to promote equality. Efforts should be made to facilitate education of children with special needs. The preschool environment should be made accessible in terms of infrastructure and provision of required teaching learning material. Early diagnosis of any developmental delay in children is essential. Hence, the preschool administration may carry out the early developmental screening of all children so that timely intervention may be provided.

Preschool can also be a better place to break the gender stereotypes by providing inclusive and gender sensitive curriculum. Teachers should demonstrate equal and appropriate expectations from boys and girls. They should give equal attention and respect to them, and also promote equal opportunities. Play and other activities should be free of gender bias.

5.2.7 Administrative/ Management

a. Monitoring and supervision

Monitoring and supervision must focus on finding out the issues concerning ECCE and devising solutions to the identified problems. With the help of a strong monitoring mechanism, the aim of early childhood education can be realized to an extent. Here, the role of the head of the centre, supervisors and the School Management Committee (SMC) is crucial especially, where the ECCE centre is attached to the formal school. Thus, a robust system of monitoring and supervision must be developed and implemented at the national and state level to bring changes at the grassroot level.

b. Regulation

Regulation is one of the important ways to ensure the quality of ECCE centres.

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A standard regulatory mechanism for institutions offering ECCE programmes and teacher training is vital. This can be done by the constitution of a dedicated agency to monitor implementation of standards and by developing assessment tool for measuring standards. This can also be fostered by making the National ECCE Council formulated by the MWCD, fully functional. It is important to note that, the responsibility of developing and implementing learning standards and a regulatory framework lies with the government.

c. Convergence/ coordination

The Government must work to build a strong and consistent convergence with different programmes, institutions and concerned Ministries to address multiple needs of children such as education, health, nutrition, safety and protection. For this purpose, different organisations and Ministries as per their nature of work must coordinate in terms of administrative, health, capacity building and monitoring/ supervision related functions.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.2

1. Fill in the blanks:

   (a) Children are ready to enter a preschool programme when they are able to _____.

   (b) A minimum of ____sq meters indoor space should be provided for a group of ___ children.

   (c) Diploma in Preschool Education must be recognized by the _____.

   (d) Children learn best in their _____ tongue.

   (e) The early childhood curriculum must provide _____ and _____ appropriate learning experiences.

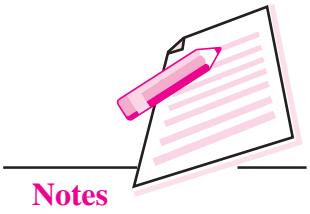
2. State whether the following statements are true or false:

   (a) Teachers should demonstrate equal and appropriate expectations from boys and girls.

   (b) Government must discourage convergence with different programmes, institutions and concerned Ministries.

   (c) Young children should be subjected to written or oral tests and examinations.

   (d) Teachers should pay less attention to the classroom environment.



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ACTIVITY 5.2

Explore the Internet and find out the names of different Ministries working for the care and education of young children.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Issues related to:
  - admission process
  - infrastructure and classroom environment
  - teachers
  - teaching learning process
  - curriculum
  - inclusion and gender
  - administration
- Directions to resolve above-mentioned issues at the individual and institutional level.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Discuss briefly the prevalent issues in ECCE.
2. Suggest ways to resolve the prevalent issues in ECCE.
3. Describe the administrative issues in ECCE and the strategies to address them.
4. Discuss the issues related to the teaching learning process in ECCE.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

5.1

(i) e)

(ii) d)

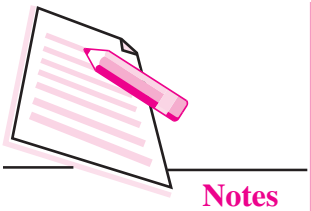
(iii) b)

(iv) c)

(v) a)

5.2

1. (a) tackle separation anxiety from family/ developed some verbal competence/ communicates basic needs/ toilet trained



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(b) 35, 25
(c) NCTE
(d) mother
(e) age, developmentally

2. (a) True
(b) False
(c) False
(d) False

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6

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

You must have noticed that a newborn cannot sit without support. But an infant four months old can sit with support for a minute. By nine months, most infants can sit without support for 10 minutes or longer. Similarly, in toddlers or children between one to three years, there is a marked transition in terms of a child's growth and developmental milestones. This makes us wonder how such rapid growth takes place in young children. Another question that arises is, how do children of a similar age group go through similar changes? Can we identify any predictable patterns in the growth and development of children? What are the factors that affect the growth and development of children? In this lesson, you will find answers to these questions. You will study what is meant by growth and development and what the principles guiding them are. You will also study the factors that affect growth and development.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- differentiate between growth and development;
- explain the principles of development;
- discuss the role of heredity and environment on children's development; and
- describe the factors affecting growth and development of children.

6.1 WHAT IS GROWTH?

We tend to talk about growth and development together. Indeed the processes of growth and development go hand in hand in each individual. That is why sometimes we may think that they are one and the same. But this is not so! We can differentiate between the two terms which are distinctly different.

To understand growth, write down the features which indicate that a child is growing well, in the space given below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

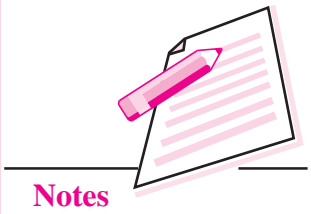
What you have just listed are indicators of growth.

Growth refers to quantitative changes in the body. The main indicators of growth are increase in height, weight and changes in the body structure and body proportions. Changes continue to occur in all domains of development but changes that take place in the physical development of children become most visible and apparent. One of the important features of growth is that these changes are measurable. The sequence, pattern and direction of changes in growth are common to all children although the rate of growth may vary from one child to another. In some cases, like in the case of children with special needs, you may find deviations in different domains of development.

Growth is rapid during the first two years of life. You will be surprised to know that between birth and first year of life, well-nourished children can undergo a 50 percent increase in height. However, not all parts of the body grow at the same rate. After the first two years of life, growth curve begins to level off and the rate of growth slows down until puberty. Puberty is marked by a growth spurt i.e. relatively fast increase in height and weight in adolescents. The table below shows the pattern of growth in terms of height and weight increments from birth till eight years in healthy children.

Average height and weight of girls/boys at different ages

Age	*Weight (kg)*	*Height (cm)*
Birth	3.3	50.5
3 months	6.0	61.1
6 months	7.8	67.8
9 months	9.2	72.3
1 year	10.2	76.1
2 years	12.3	85.6
3 years	14.6	94.9



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4 years	16.7	102.9
5 years	18.7	109.9
6 years	20.7	116.1
7 years	22.9	121.7
8 years	25.3	127.0

Source: ICMR (1990) Nutrient Requirements and Recommended Dietary Allowances for Indians.

Physical growth is measured by increase in height and weight at regular intervals. The height of a newborn child ranges from 47 cms to 52 cms. The weight can range from 2.4 kg to 3.2 kg. On an average, increment in weight is 2.0–2.5 kg per year. Boys tend to be heavier and taller than girls during infancy and even as toddlers. A steady increase in both height and weight is a good indicator of satisfactory physical growth. A height and weight chart is a good way of assessing health and physical development of children. Growth charts that monitor growth should be maintained regularly for all children.

Along with an increase in height and weight, body proportions of children also undergo changes. You must have noticed that the head of a newborn looks bigger compared to the rest of the body. The top of the head appears to be large and the face remains small. Later body proportions change and the head does not look that big. However, throughout infancy and toddler hood, the lower portion continues to remain small and underdeveloped. The growth of the head is proportionately much less after birth as compared to the growth of the other parts of the body. The head increases in size and accounts for one-fourth of a child's length at two years of age. Its width-wise grow this almost ninety percent complete by the age of three years. However, functional development of the brain continues into adolescence.

Compared to the first year, the trunk and limbs begin to grow at a faster pace during toddlerhood. When children are born, their arms appear to be longer in proportion to their legs. At birth, the legs are short and face each other. As they grow in length, they straighten out. During the first and second years, the height of infants increases approximately by 40 percent and 60-75 percent respectively, greater than at birth. As a result of this change, the body of a child looks more proportionate than it did in the first year. This also helps children attain better balance. This pattern of growth remains the same for both boys and girls, but on an average, baby girls are slightly smaller than baby boys in size.

Let us now understand what development is.

6.2 WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

Development refers to qualitative changes in the body as well as changes in

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behaviour and attitude. It is difficult to measure or quantify development as these changes are not quantitative. It is important to note that physical growth is measurable quantitatively; however, certain changes such as cognitive and socio-emotional maturity may not be measured in quantitative terms. These need to be measured in qualitative terms.

Development is governed by certain principles. These are discussed below.

6.2.1 Principles of Development

Development is continuous and involves change

Do young children start walking suddenly or are there intermediary steps leading to walking? You may have noticed that during infancy, while learning to walk, infants first learn to crawl, then to stand with support, then to stand without support and finally to walk. This points to the fact that development involves changes at each step and continues to take place all the time. We may or may not notice these changes on a day-to-day basis. But these changes in body and behavioural pattern, which are indicators of development take place continuously. At times, development is rapid and at other times, it slows down. But it is continuous. It does not stop at any time. It is worth mentioning that changes appear not only in physical features and body structure but also in the socio-emotional and cognitive development of children.

Development is sequential

As already mentioned, children learn to stand before walking. Similarly, they scribble before writing. These illustrate that there is a pattern in development. This development is sequential. All children follow more or less similar developmental patterns with one stage leading to the other.

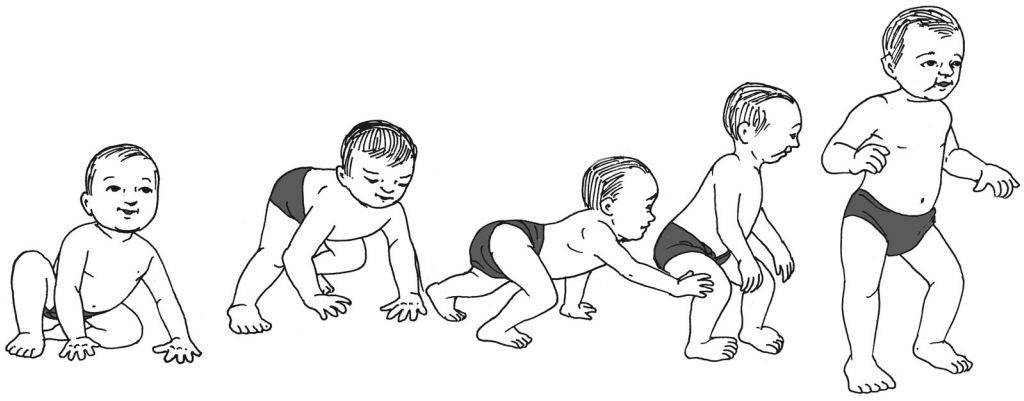

Fig. 6.1 The Developmental Sequence

The sequential pattern of development proceeds in two directions. First, development proceeds from upper part of the body to the lower part of the body,

i.e. from head to toe. This head-to-toe sequence is called **Cephalocaudal** (Latin "head to tail")principle of development. This shows that development in children's head region comes first, followed by trunk region, and finally, in the leg region. This pattern helps to understand why children learn to see an object before they can control their trunk and they learn to sit before they can stand.

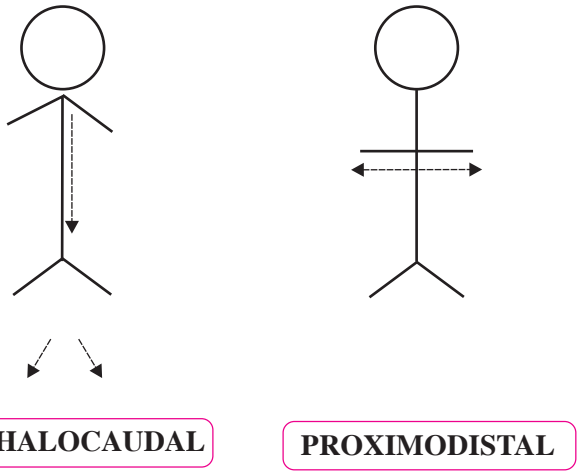

Fig. 6.2 Pattern of Development

Development also proceeds from central parts of the body to peripheral parts referred to as near to far sequence. This is called **Proximodistal** (Latin, "near to far") principle of development. In a foetus, the head and trunk region gets well developed before the rudimentary limb buds appear. Gradually, the arm buds develop into hands and fingers. That is the reason why children master using their arms before their hands. They develop control over their fingers much later.

Apart from physical and motor development, are there predictable patterns and sequences in other developments also? The answer is, yes. There is a predictable pattern of development for different cognitive functions. Initially, children's thinking is built on concrete objects in their environment and later they can think in terms of abstract ideas as well. Therefore, young children need concrete objects and pictures to manipulate. They learn by doing and engaging in a variety of activities. Later, children develop concepts in abstract terms also. Likewise, other domains of development also follow a sequential pattern.

Here it is important to bring attention to the fact that although ordinarily the sequence is common to all children, certain aspects of development may remain affected in some children due to a variety of reasons.

Development is a product of maturation and learning

You must have observed that normally most children learn to sit around at the age of six months, stand while holding in eight to nine months take their first steps between 9 and 12 months and start walking by 13 to 15 months. Under normal circumstances, all children have the potential to sit, stand and walk. But

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they can perform the particular tasks only when they get physically and mentally mature.

Maturation is the unfolding of characteristics potentially present in the individual. This comes from genetic endowment. Genetically, we are born with capacities to walk, speak, think and so forth. There is an internal timetable within us that propels us to start walking and speaking at the time when our body and mind becomes mature enough. Have you observed how young children learn? They learn through imitation and trial and error. *Learning* brings change in behaviour due to environmental learning which includes effort and exercise. Maturation and learning are closely related, one influences the other. Children develop as per their internal genetic time table as well as external environmental inputs. Thus, development is the product of maturation and learning.

There are individual differences in development

At each stage of development, one can expect certain competencies to appear in every domain of development. These are called developmental milestones. Milestones of development present the age ranges during which the majority of children accomplish age specific skills.

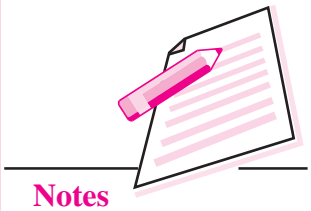
It is important to note that there are individual differences in development. No two children are alike. Each child is unique. One child may start speaking early and the other might take more time to speak. The range of variability depends on many factors like heredity and environment. Each child has different experiences that interact with the unique hereditary pattern. Although the sequence of development is fairly uniform, predetermined and common to all children, the rate and pace of development may vary from child to child. Developmental differences are routine among children unless a child deviates drastically from the normal developmental pattern.

The child develops as a unified whole

Different domains of development are interrelated and therefore the child develops as a unified whole. Each domain of development affects the other and is, in turn, affected by the others. Any problem in one aspect of development is likely to affect others. For example, a child who may be either chronically ill or may have delayed physical-motor development, may not be able to participate subsequently in physical activities with other children. As a result, the child may not get a chance to mingle with other children and this may affect all other aspects of development including social-emotional, cognitive and language. The impact may be minor and temporary, or serious and permanent.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 6.1

1. What is meant by development?



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2. State whether the following statements are true or false:
   (a) It is not necessary to understand that each child is unique.
   (b) Development is the product of maturation and growth.
   (c) The child develops as a unified whole.
   (d) Any problem in one aspect of development is likely to affect the others.
   (e) Development is a sequential process.

6.3 FACTORS AFFECTING GROWTH ANDDEVELOPMENT

You have already studied about growth and development and the principles that govern development. To understand what factors affect growth and development, let us go through the following case studies:

Case Study 1:

Sudhir was a small-built baby. Although he was born after completing the full period of gestation in his mother's womb. At the time of birth, his birth weight and height were less than those of an average newborn. Both his parents are shorter in height than the average population. As Sudhir reaches eight years of age, his parents observe that he is shorter in height among the rest of his classmate.

Case Study 2:

Sonu has grown up in a slum and his parents are daily wagers in a factory. His family lives in poverty and sometimes does not have enough to eat. Sonu shows poor intellectual and academic performance.

Case Study 3:

Reema is a three year old girl growing up in an urban locality. She is not able to speak properly. Both her parents are busy in their respective jobs. The child is looked after by a domestic help who takes care of her well but does not talk much to her. Most of the time Reema is made to sleep.

Write down in the space below the probable reasons for Sudhir's below-average physical growth, Sonu's poor performance and Reema's impaired language development.

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Some of you may have attributed the present condition of these three children as being due to genetic factors, and the health of the mother and the child during the prenatal and postnatal periods. Some of you may have attributed these largely to environmental reasons such as less opportunities of stimulation and poor nutrition of the child. This is what the nature-versus–nurture controversy is all about. Some psychologists believe that our heredity affects us more than environmental factors. Some believe the opposite is true. There is no clear answer as to what impacts us more, our genetic make-up or the inputs that we get from our environment. But generally, there is a consensus that both impact us. Let us explore these in greater depth in the following sections.

6.3.1 Heredity

You may like to know whether intelligent parents will always have intelligent children. Do parents of short stature only have short children? Will a child get asthma, if the mother is suffering from asthma? A child may or may not inherit the characteristics mentioned above. It depends on the genetic material a child receives at the time of conception from both the parents through genes, which are structural units of chromosomes.

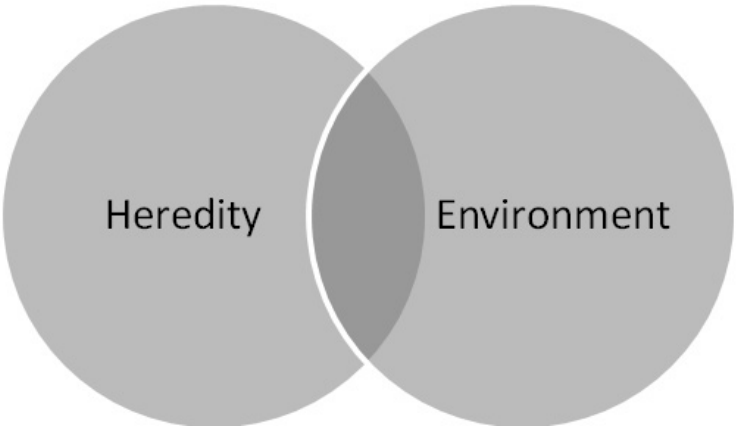
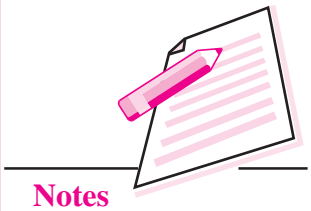


Fig. 6.3 Interrelationship of hereditary and environment factors

Heredity or genetics is found to influence the development of a children's intellectual potential, height, weight and general physical appearance. The genetic makeup inherited from parents seems to be tied to maturation of the body and the brain which influences growth and developmental milestones. After conception, nothing can be done to add to or subtract from the child's hereditary endowment.These characteristics of the child are also determined at the time of fertilisation. At the time of conception, every child receives 46 chromosomes, of which 23 are contributed by the mother and 23, by the father. The X chromosomes passed on by the father will determine the sex of the child.



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To an extent, susceptibility to certain diseases (such as colour blindness, Down's Syndrome, asthma, diabetes) also depends on heredity. In addition to that, certain personality characteristics such as temperament may also be affected by genetic factors. However, genetic pre-dispositions can be over ridden by environmental influences. One can create or provide an environment that can help reduce the impact of heredity. In Case Study 1, Sudhir can be provided with healthy food and height-promoting exercises to help reduce the effect of heredity. Similarly, in Case Study 3, Reema can be provided a stimulating environment to help her interact and communicate better.

6.3.2 Environmental Factors

Many environmental factors such as mother's state of health, age, disease and emotional states and exposure of the unborn baby to environmental pollution, to X-rays and drugs affect the child. Certain contextual factors such as family, gender, culture and society at large also influence children's development. Let us read about these environmental factors in detail.

We are familiar that children experience their immediate environment after they are born. However, even before children are born, they experience the environment within their mother's womb. A child and the mother are connected in more than one way. The mother's state of health, diseases, age and emotional states also affect the child. If a mother keeps good health and takes proper nutrition, during and after pregnancy and also during lactation, then the child will also be healthy. However, if a mother has diseases or is nutritionally weak, then the child born to her may also be affected by this. Creating a conducive environment may not totally help the child overcome the constraints set by heredity, but it can help reduce their effect.

➢ Nutrition, health and hygiene needs of a child and the mother

The foundations for growth and healthy development are laid from the mother's womb. Maternal health is an important factor which affects the growth and development of a child. A foetus gets nourishment from the mother's diet. Therefore, it is very important that during pregnancy, the mother takes a balanced diet which is rich in all necessary nutrients. Moreover, antibodies produced by the mother to combat infectious diseases are transmitted to the foetus, usually producing immunity at birth and for some months thereafter. The placenta also acts as a barrier against some harmful agents, including viruses, microorganisms and various chemicals. Thus, it is important to give both the mother and the child proper and timely immunisation and other health check-ups to prevent various diseases.

Along with mother's and child's nutrition and health, keeping them clean by giving them a regular bath, cleaning of teeth, hair, nails, nose and eyes are other important factors that must be given attention.

Notes

➢ Age of the mother

Besides the mother's health, her age also affects foetal development. Reproductive organs of mothers who are less than seventeen years of age are not fully mature and the hormones required for reproduction are not at the optimum level. Among young teenagers, pregnancy tends to inhibit the mother's as well as the child's growth. Young mothers are at high risk of complications during pregnancy. Likewise, after the age of 35, hormonal activity gradually decreases and may lead to complications. Women over the age of 40 run a risk of having children with chromosomal abnormality.

➢ Emotional state of mother

Children are not just affected by the mother's physical state but also by the mother's emotional state. Emotions like rage, fear and anxiety bring the mother's nervous system into action and thereby, certain chemicals are released into the bloodstream of the mother. These substances are transmitted to the foetus. Prolonged emotional stress during pregnancy may have lasting consequences on the child. Infants born to upset, unhappy mothers are more likely to be premature or have low birth weights, be hyper active and irritable; and may manifest difficulties such as irregular eating, excessive bowel movements, gas, sleep disturbances and excessive crying.

➢ Exposure to X-rays

During pregnancy, one needs to avoid unnecessary exposure to X-rays unless the doctor advises it. Repeated exposures to radiation during early conception period may have harmful effects on the physical and mental development of the foetus.

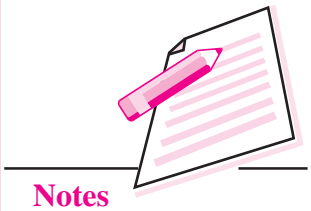
Drugs

Many drugs are suspected of producing birth defects if they are taken during pregnancy. These include some antibiotics, hormones and steroids. Many a time one finds pregnant women taking medicine without realising its impact on the foetus. It can be harmful or even prove fatal to the unborn child.

➢ Drinking and Smoking

Drinkingbypregnantwomencanproducefoetalalcoholsyndrome.Thesymptoms of this condition include retarded prenatal and postnatal growth, premature birth, mental retardation, physical malformations, sleep disturbances and congenital heart disease.

Smoking by a pregnant woman retards the growth of the foetus and lowers the newborn's birth weight and resistance to illness. It also increases the chances of spontaneous abortion and premature birth, and may affect long-term physical and cognitive development. This is a consequence of the reduced capacity of the



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mother's blood to transport oxygen to the foetus. Caffeine is also likely to cause abortion, still birth and premature birth of the child.

➢ Environmental Pollution

You will be surprised to know that environmental pollution is another factor that affects prenatal development. Exposure of pregnant women to environmental pollution can seriously affect the developing foetus. For instance, pregnant women can absorb lead from car exhaust, paint flaking off the walls in old houses and other materials used in industrial establishments. The high levels of lead exposures are consistently linked to prematurity, low birth weight, brain damage and slightly poor mental development during the first two years. It may also lead to a variety of physical defects.

Other Contextual Factors

Certain contextual factors such as socio-economic status of a child's family, their living conditions, family structure, child rearing practices and the society at large also impact growth and development of children. Let us read more about them.

➢ Socio-economic background

Children from different socio-economic backgrounds may vary in terms of their growth and development. This is on account of factors like nutrition, number of illnesses and overall standards of health. Lack of opportunities and exposure, especially in early years, lead to a lag in certain aspects of development.

➢ Living conditions, illness and accidents

If living conditions are poor, children may suffer from a variety of diseases leaving them with stunted growth and development. Some homes lack proper sunlight and ventilation. Unhygienic living conditions within homes and outside make children susceptible to water-borne diseases like diarrhoea, typhoid and many other ailments of the stomach. Respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases are frequent among many children brought up in an unhygienic environment which may even prove fatal. Children who grow up in unhygienic conditions are also likely to catch common illnesses like measles, chicken pox, whooping cough, diarrhoea and diphtheria. These illnesses may be mild or prolonged in a particular child, but they are most likely to affect growth and delay development.

Other than these, accidents due to lack of safety measures and negligence may lead to physical and intellectual impairments.

➢ Family structure

The changing structure of the family from joint to nuclear has decreased the number of persons including children and grandparents that children interact with. This has an impact on their development including their socio- emotional development.

Notes

Shrinking family size clubbed with the busy schedules of the parents due to their work commitments often leave the children being socialized by different forms of media and technology. Children's engagement with modern day gadgets such as phones, laptops, tablets and televisions may impact their overall growth and development.

➢ Child-rearing practices

Some parents are authoritarian and make strict rules and regulations that the children must follow. This creates fear and insecurity in the children. On the other hand, some parents take children's choices and opinions into consideration while deciding anything for children. Thus, child rearing practices may have positive or negative impact on the children's development. A balanced attitude of parents towards children creates pleasant experiences and favourable environment that helps children to become confident, have high self-esteem and find people around them trustworthy.

➢ Enabling and stimulating environment

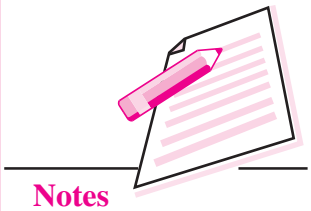
An enabling and stimulating environment both at home and at school is essential for children's healthy growth and development. The development of children will be positive in a home where they are encouraged to play and interact freely with parents and caregivers. This promotes all the domains of development. Similarly, it is also necessary that children are allowed to ask questions and given an opportunity to explore and experiment at school. If their enthusiasm is curbed and they are discouraged for participating, then their cognitive and socio-emotional development is likely to get affected.

➢ Influence of Siblings

Apart from parents, children are strongly influenced by their siblings. They can be a source of emotional security and can help each other acquire skills. If the parents involve an older child in supporting them in looking after the younger sibling, the child learns responsibility and develops a willingness to share. On the other hand, siblings may develop jealousy and rivalry with each other. Parents should avoid comparing the siblings, as this can create resentment and jealousy. They should also ensure that their behaviour towards them is impartial and fair.

• Peer group

Beyond the confines of home and one's immediate family, how well children are accepted within the peer group deeply influences their self-concept. The peer group helps children to learn and behave in a socially acceptable manner. Acceptance by one's peer group is a strong source of emotional support. Though parents teach social behaviour, it is in the company of friends that children learn sharing, cooperation, autonomy, skills of leadership and a sense of competition. Hence, the importance of peer group in healthy growth and development cannot be undermined.



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- **Gender and Culture**

Learning to behave according to the gender roles prescribed by society is an important task that children have to master to be accepted by the peer group. Differences in behaviour shown by boys and girls emerge because of parental and societal expectations. Often, it is seen that boys are encouraged to fight back and not to cry "like a girl" while crying is accepted in girls when they are attacked. This is harmful as it creates gender stereotypes, and parents and teachers should ensure that no such behaviour is encouraged through action and words. In addition to this, cultural practices also directly and indirectly influence children's growth and development.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 6.2

1. Fill in the blanks:
   a. Children learn ——————————,—————————— —— and ———————————— in the company of friends.
   b. ———————————— and ———————————— diseases are frequent among many children living in an unhygienic environment.
2. Name any two diseases one can be susceptible to due to hereditary reasons.

ACTIVITY 6.1

Collect information from your community on cultural practices specifically related to health and nutrition that affects the growth and development of children.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- The term growth refers to changes in height, weight and body structure. It refers to quantitative changes in the body that are measurable. Growth is rapid during the first two years of life.
- Development refers to qualitative changes in the body as well as changes in behaviour and attitude. It is difficult to measure development.
- Development is continuous and sequential, involves change and is a product of maturation and learning.
- There are individual differences in development.
- Development is influenced by heredity and a number of environmental factors such as nutrition, health, age and emotional state of the mother. It is also affected by exposure to X-rays, intake of drugs, socio-economic background, living conditions, family structure and child-rearing practices.

Notes

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by the term growth? What are the main indicators of growth?
2. State the differences between growth and development with examples.
3. Explain the principles of development with relevant examples.
4. "A child develops as a unified whole." Justify the statement.
5. Why do we say that development is the product of maturation and learning?
6. Name some of the contextual factors that can affect the child. Explain any two of these in detail.
7. What effects can exposure to environmental factors such as pollution, X-rays and drugs have on the foetus?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

6.1

1. Development refers to qualitative changes in the body as well as changes in behavior and attitude.
2. (a) False
   (b) False
   (c) True
   (d) True
   (e) True

6.2

1. (a) cooperation, autonomy, skills of leadership
   (b) Typhoid and diarrhoea
2. colour blindness, diabetes

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7

DOMAINS OF DEVELOPMENT

Development of children is a complex and a continuous process. It takes place in many areas or domains which together influences their holistic development.

In the previous lesson, you have learnt about growth and development of children and the principles of development. In this lesson, you will study in details the different domains of development namely, physical and motor, socio- emotional, moral, cognitive and language development.

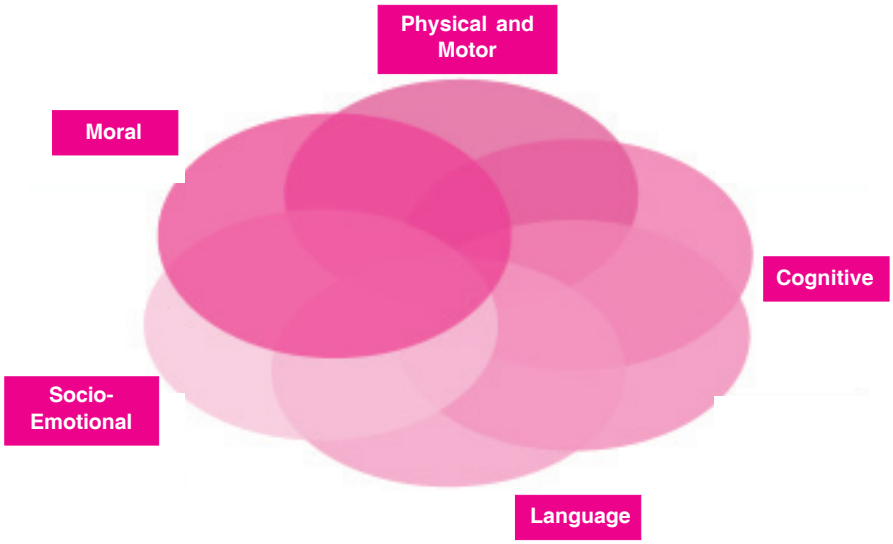


Fig. 7.1 Domains of Development

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- discuss the features of each of the many domains of development; and
- discuss the significance of developmental milestones.

Notes

7.1 DOMAINS OF DEVELOPMENT

Domains of development refer to different areas or aspects in which children's development takes place. The various domains of development are:

1. Physical and motor development including gross and fine motor skills.
2. Socio-emotional development refers to an understanding of self and the social environment, managing and expressing emotions in a socially desirable manner.
3. Moral development refers to the sense of right and wrong.
4. Cognitive development refers to thinking and understanding of various concepts and phenomenon.
5. Language development, communication, emergent and early literacy focusing on listening, comprehension, oral/speaking skills and writing.

Let us study about each of these domains of development in detail.

7.1.1 Physical and Motor Development

Physical growth and development includes increase in height, weight and changes in the proportions of the body structure. It includes the development of bones. The entire structure of the body depends on the bones, i.e. on their size, proportion and density. They give an overall configuration and look to the body. You have read in the previous lesson that physical development takes place in two ways, proximodistal and cephalocaudal. Physical development includes not only changes happening externally but also what happens internally in the body. It also includes changes and maturation of internal organs. As children grow physically, the internal organs including the brain and the central nervous system also develop.

Physical development can be understood better in terms of fine and gross motor skills. Motor skills are physical abilities that children develop, which help them control the movements of their bodies. In a relatively short period of time, they begin to develop simple motor skills.

Children develop two broad kinds of motor skills–gross motor skills and fine motor skills. Gross motor skills involve large muscles and help control actions of children such as crawling, standing, walking, climbing, running and so forth. Fine motor skills involves mall muscles and affects the ability to use hands and fingers effectively. Fine-motor skill development usually involves eye-hand co-ordination, which is the ability to match the movements of the hands with what the eyes see. Developing fine motor skills help children in holding things like a cup or a crayon, turning the pages of a book, buttoning and zipping, drawing and writing, etc. In simple words, fine motor skills help children grasp, hold, move and handle different objects. Most of the activities of children, as well as ours, require a combination of gross and fine motor skills.

Physical development takes place continuously throughout our entire life. However, the nature and rate of growth may vary depending upon the stage of development. Every child develops at her/ his own pace. Some children grow faster while some are not that fast but it does not mean that they are physically immature or less developed. Every child is different, therefore, individual differences can be seen among children sharing similar genomes and environmental conditions. In addition to that, gender differences in physical development can also be observed.

Fig. 7.2 Development of Fine Motor Skills

INTEXT QUESTIONS 7.1

(a) What is meant by gross and fine motor skills?

(b) Suggest two activities that parents can organise at home to promote gross and fine mot or development of their children.

7.1.2 Socio-Emotional Development

Do you talk to a child and an adult differently? Do you talk to your teacher and your friend differently? How did you learn to behave differently with different people, depending upon your relationship with that person? Do you behave similarly in all situations or do you behave differently in different situations? When children enter this complex world, they do not know any rules and regulations of society. They gradually learn to interact with others, relate with others and obey social rules. How we relate to others in different social situations and learn to act according to the established social rules and regulations of society comes under social development. It also includes participation and involvement in social activities and understanding the meaning of being part of social groups. A child is a social being and needs to connect with people around for a fulfilling life.

Emotional development refers to the development of emotions and feelings in children. Some emotions such as happiness, fear and anger can be termed as basic emotions as they can be inferred directly from a person's facial expressions. Certain emotions such as shame, guilt and envy can be classified as complex emotions as they cannot be simply inferred from facial expressions. Children are born with basic emotions and they develop complex emotions overtime.

Have you experienced any changes in the way you express the following emotions? Please write the changes.

Anger: .....

.....

Fear: .....

.....

Sadness:.....

.....

.....

Do you recall how you used to show your love or anger towards your parents when you were five years old ? How do you express the same feelings now? Can you notice any transition in expressing the same emotions towards your parents? This brings us to the point that expression of emotions and behaviours related to them evolve over time. Some of these changes may be a result of our own emotional maturity and exposure to the surroundings.

Cultural differences in the expression of emotions may also exist as each culture teaches its children to show their emotions in a different manner. Gender differences in expression of different emotions might also vary.

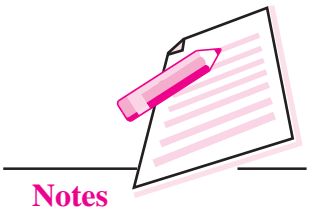
7.1.2.1 Socio-emotional development at different stages

- **Infancy**

Infants interact with people around them by smiling, crying, babbling and cooing. All these initiate and sustain the infant's interaction with others. When an infant receives positive response and stimulation from others in the environment, s/he is encouraged to develop socially. By the age of six to eight months, infants learn to develop a sense of belongingness and begin to develop attachment with parents and other familiar persons in their world. It is seen that infants feel stranger anxiety, i.e., fear of being separated from their primary caregiver when they complete the first year of their life. This anxiety decreases gradually and children develop special attachments. By the age of two years, children begin to detach a little from their parents and learn to show autonomy by saying 'no' to what they do not want to do.

- **Early Childhood**

Children develop self-awareness by the age of two to five years. They develop attitudes, likes and dislikes and ways of acting. Socialisation is the process by which children acquire skills to become responsible adults in their society. Children are socialised primarily by parents who make children understand and



realise the difference between right and wrong and help in developing a code of conduct in them. A strong identification process helps in socialisation as children observe and imitate their parents who become role models for their children.

The social world of preschool children expands and includes their peer group in school and in the neighbourhood. They begin to engage in cooperative play and games with them. These provide a ground to relate with others and understand social situations better. They also begin to develop a psychological identity as members of either one or the other gender and insist on following gender appropriate behaviour. Gender role identity arises from a number of factors-from biological differences between the sexes and from the way parents and others socialise boys and girls.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 7.2

1. Find as many words as you can related to emotions in the following grid:

W	X	Y	Z	J	E	A	L	O	U	S	Y	K	L	M
A	B	C	D	O	F	S	H	O	C	K	N	N	O	P
H	A	P	P	Y	O	U	Q	H	O	P	E	S	Y	F
O	B	A	N	G	E	R	R	L	T	P	R	I	D	E
P	W	I	H	J	U	P	S	E	T	K	V	M	B	A
E	O	N	S	Y	C	R	A	G	E	P	O	L	Y	R
F	R	D	F	G	H	I	N	O	K	T	U	S	Z	O
U	R	H	J	B	D	S	A	D	O	B	S	K	J	C
L	Y	F	L	O	V	E	Q	Z	T	U	W	V	B	A
S	C	A	R	E	D	F	J	R	M	O	K	S	T	L
E	M	B	A	R	R	A	S	S	M	E	N	T	F	M

7.1.3 Moral Development

The word *moral* has been taken from the word *mores* which means manners and customs. In the simplest terms, it is a sense of right and wrong. It includes moral behaviour, moral reasoning and judgment. Moral behavior entails acting in a morally right manner. Moral reasoning refers to weighing options as right or wrong. This is based on whether or not we are able to understand multiple perspectives related to the problem.

Let us read about development of moral reasoning in children.

7.1.3.1 Development of moral reasoning in children

A number of psychologists have described moral development among children.

Let us briefly study the stages of moral development as proposed by psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg.

According to Piaget, children's moral development can be understood by observing their understanding of rules during play. He described children moral development through two stages namely heteronomous and autonomous morality.

Heteronomous Stage	Children believe that rules are universal, fixed and handed down by any external authority. They believe that rules cannot be changed and anyone who breaks the rules will be punished. Since children in this stage see rules as unchangeable, they seldom show any flexibility towards changing rules.
Autonomous Stage	As children grow older, their sense of morality moves towards more flexibility and they start believing in everyone's good. Children believe that rules are for the benefit of all and if any rule does not benefit all, it can be changed by common consensus.

According to Lawrence Kohlberg, moral development takes place at three levels:

- The pre-moral level
- The level of conventional morality
- Post-conventional morality

At the pre-moral stage, children learn right and wrong from the people around them. Their conduct is determined by external factors like approval and disapproval by authority figures or rewards and punishment. Thus, a child's behavior is oriented towards obedience and punishment. As the child approaches middle childhood, the capacity to understand relationships and moral codes expand and it continues to grow in adolescence.

At the level of conventional morality, children tend to believe that rules can be changed if they do not serve the common good of the society.

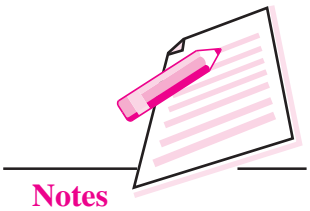
In the post-conventional stage of moral development, the sense of right and wrong is decided by one's own conscience and nothing can be imposed from outside. One may keep certain universals like value for life at the highest order of values and may also break a law for the same.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 7.3

1. Choose the correct option:

   (a) Theory of Moral Development (three levels) is given by:

   ☐ Kohlberg



☐ Piaget

☐ Erickson

(b) Stage when child involves own sense of right and wrong before accepting societal norms of morality:

☐ Post-conventional morality

☐ Conventional morality

☐ Pre-moral stage

2. Fill in the blanks.

(a) Piaget described morality through _____ and _____ morality.

(b) During heteronomous stage, children believe rules as being _____ ____ and _____.

7.1.4 Cognitive Development

It involves cognitive processes such as knowing, thinking, remembering, recognising, categorising, imagining, reasoning, decision-making and so forth. According to Piaget, children's understanding of the world expands as they experience new ideas and challenges. Children construct their own knowledge through interaction with the surroundings. Cognitive development proceeds as children mature.

Piaget divided cognitive development into four stages. These stages appear in the same order in all individuals and no stage can be skipped. However, individual differences in the pace with which children pass through these stages may differ within certain limits.

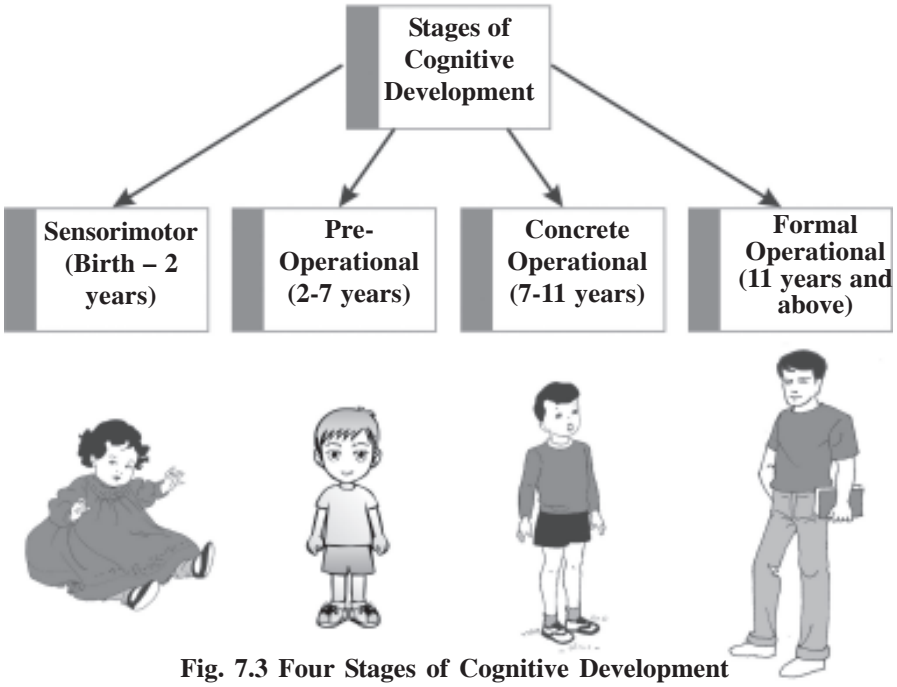

Stages of Cognitive Development
Sensorimotor (Birth – 2 years)
Pre-Operational (2-7 years)
Concrete Operational (7-11 years)
Formal Operational (11 years and above)

Fig. 7.3 Four Stages of Cognitive Development

Notes

- **The Sensorimotor Stage (0-2 years)**

The first stage of cognitive development as proposed by Piaget is known as the sensorimotor stage. It extends from birth to two years of age. Piaget believed that infants are active learners who are responsive to stimulation in their environment. They learn quickly and distinguish between various features of the immediate environment. For example, an infant learns to distinguish between a spoon and mother's milk and opens his mouth differently for the two.

Reflex actions such as sucking, grasping inherited by the infant become the building blocks for cognitive learning. With time, they learn to act intentionally. Infants learn to imitate others in their environment. As they grow, they can also imitate a person who is not present in the immediate environment. This is called 'deferred imitation.'

Gradually, infants develop object permanence i.e. the understanding that objects continue to exist even when out of sight. For example, a four month old child does not look out for a ball with which she/he was playing if went out of sight but a child about 15 months old will definitely do.

- **The Pre-Operational Stage (2-7 years)**

This is the second stage of cognitive development which is basically a pre-logical stage as logic has not yet fully developed. It extends from two to seven years of age. There are a few cognitive limitations that characterise children's cognition at this stage. They are:

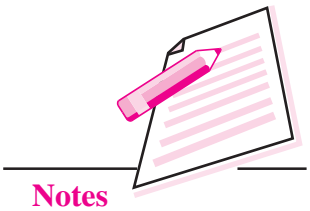
Animistic and illogical thinking: At this stage, children think that non-living objects also possess life like qualities. For example, children may reason that if an object is moving, it is alive; if it is not moving, it is not alive. Thus, to a child at this stage, clouds are living thing.

Egocentrism: Children think that everyone thinks the same way as they do and fail to recognize another person's perspective.

Reversibility: Children do not understand that for any activity, the events can be traced back to the original starting point. For example, if water from a tall glass is poured in a wide empty glass, the water can be poured back into the tall glass to bring it to the original state.

Conservation: Children lack the ability to conserve at this stage which means they fail to understand that the external appearance of an object changes but the physical properties of that object remain the same. For example, if we pour equal amount of water into two glasses, one tall and one wide and if we ask children which glass has more water, children intuitively point to the glass that they perceive has more water.

Children also fail to understand multiple perspectives and categorise objects into sub-categories based on more than one characteristic feature of the object.



• Concrete Operational Stage (7-11 years)

The concrete operational stage starts from seven years of age and continues till 11 years. The limitations of the pre-operational stage come to an end at this stage. Children develop logical thinking but they still find difficulty in applying logic to hypothetical situations. Their logic is limited to concrete observable characteristics of the objects and situations. Children are now capable of understanding others' viewpoints.

One of the most important characteristics of the concrete operational stage children is decentering. At this stage, children's thinking is not centered on one aspect of an object only. They can take into account more than one aspect when categorizing objects. They also have reversibility of thought where they can carry a thought or operation backward and forward.

They can now arrange objects in a serial order depending on the object's defining features. This is called seriation. For example, they can arrange a set of pencils of different sizes in ascending or descending order.

All these characteristics make them better problem solvers than children in the pre-operational stage of cognitive development.

• The Formal Operational Stage (11 years and above)

The formal operational stage begins around 11 years of age.

Here, children are able to perform higher order mental operations. Their thought is flexible and they can deal effectively with the complex problems involving reasoning. One of the defining characteristics of formal thought is the ability to perform hypothetic co-deductive reasoning**.** Adolescents can make hypothesis and find all the possible solutions to any abstract problem and then apply the best suited to solve.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 7.4

1. Match Column A and Column B.

Column A	Column B
(a) If something is moving, it is alive	(i) Infancy
(b) Grasping, sucking, blinking	(ii) Animistic thinking
(c) Hypothetic co-deductive reasoning	(iii) Piaget
(d) Deferred imitation	(iv) Adolescence
(e) Cognitive theory	(v) Reflex action

Notes

2. Fill in the blanks.

   (a) Cognitive development has been divided into four stages, namely .....,.....,....., ...and..... .

   (b) The ability to understand that even when outer appearance changes, physical properties remain the same is called ..... .

   (c) I am thinking and I know everyone is thinking the same thing, refers to ..... .

   (d) Imitating someone in their absence is termed as ..... .

   (e) Deducing the best solution out of every possible solution for a hypothetically framed problem is known as ..... .

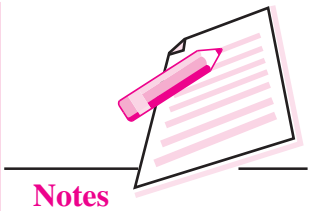
7.1.5 Language Development, Communication and Emergent Literacy

Language is the ability that separates humans from animals. As humans in society, we use our language ability continuously to communicate our ideas, share our feelings, understand each other and build social relationships. Language is an essential key for thinking, learning and making sense of the world around. Language also equips us to revisit events in the past and plan for the future. It also helps us to evaluate our strategies of work and manipulate our own ideas. Most importantly, language serves as a tool to support cognition and vice-versa.

Language is crucial the development of young children. Language development goes hand in hand with growth and maturation of the brain. The early years of life are considered critical periods for language development. From birth up to the age of six years, children develop language at a very rapid pace. Any stimulation given at this age for language development significantly impacts children. Ordinarily, language development takes place in all human beings but the age and the pace at which children reach each milestone varies. In general, girls develop language at a faster rate than boys, although both achieve the same language complexities later. Language occurs both receptively and expressively through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

7.1.5.1 Development of language

Soon after birth, infants begin communication by laughing, crying and making vowel-like cooing sounds. They also communicate through gestures and try to communicate their comfort and discomfort. By about four months of age, the nature of these sounds change and infants begin to manipulate their vocal apparatus during vocal play. Starting around six or seven months of age, cooing develops into real language like sounds called babbling (e.g. baba, mama etc).



I Pre-Speech Form of Communication

(i) Crying

(ii) Cooing and babbling

(iii) Gestures

II Speech Form of Communication

(iv) Comprehension

(v) Pronunciation

(vi) Vocabulary

(vii) Sentence formation

Children learn to comprehend language before they can themselves produce it. You may have noticed that in the early years of life, children's speech is not clear but soon, their pronunciation becomes clear. Children's vocabulary increases with age. In the early years of life, the number of words that children add to their vocabulary is tremendous. They acquire new words rather quickly and become

Good at generalising newly acquired words. Initially, children combine two to three words to make meaningful phrases (for eg. 'give me food') and later they combine more than three words to make short sentences. Gradually, the child develops language competencies sufficient enough for forming complex sentences. Along with these, in middle childhood, they also acquire social rules of language usage. They understand that language used with different persons can be different and the language used in different places can also differ. They become skilled at using certain kind of language with their parents, teachers and adults and use another kind of language within their peer groups.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 7.5

1. Fill in the blanks.

   (a) ..... develops before the children use words.

   (b) Children's interaction with people starts with ..... .

   (c) Early years of life are considered ..... periods for language development.

   (d) Language occurs both ..... and ....

2. State whether the following statements are true or false.

   (a) Comprehension develops before use of words by children.

(b) Early stimulation is not necessary for later language development.

(c) Babbling starts before cooing.

ACTIVITY 7.1

Draw a poster/layout/pamphlet to bring awareness in your community on the theme 'Importance of all domains of development to bring out holistic development in children'.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Domains of development are different areas or aspects in which children's development takes place.
- Physical and motor development includes bodily growth and development of gross and fine motor skills.
- Socio-emotional development encompasses understanding of self and others; understanding and management of emotions.
- Moral development refers to the sense of right and wrong. It also includes moral behavior and reasoning.
- Cognitive development refers to thinking, understanding and concept formation.
- Language development, communication, emergent and early literacy are built upon skills of listening, comprehension, oral/speaking skills and writing.

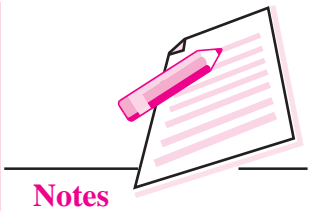
TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you mean by domains of development? Discuss any two domains in detail.
2. How does physical development proceed in children?
3. Explain the stages of moral development as proposed by Piaget and Kohlberg.
4. Briefly explain the stages of cognitive development in children.
5. Discuss the importance of language for humans.

ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

7.1

(a) Gross motor skills involve large muscles and help control actions of children



such as crawling, standing, walking, climbing, running and jumping. Fine motor skills involve small muscles and the ability to use hands and fingers effectively to colour, draw, etc.

(b) For gross motor development,-climbing, running, catching, jumping, hopping, swinging.

For fine motor development, drawing, colouring, threading beads, tearing, pasting, paper folding, clay work.

7.2

W	X	Y	Z	J	E	A	L	O	U	S	Y	K	L	M
A	B	C	D	O	F	S	H	O	C	K	N	N	O	P
H	A	P	P	Y	O	U	Q	H	O	P	E	S	Y	F
O	B	A	N	G	E	R	R	L	T	P	R	I	D	E
P	W	I	H	J	U	P	S	E	T	K	V	M	B	A
E	O	N	S	Y	C	R	A	G	E	P	O	L	Y	R
F	R	D	F	G	H	I	N	O	K	T	U	S	Z	O
U	R	H	J	B	D	S	A	D	O	B	S	K	J	C
L	Y	F	L	O	V	E	Q	Z	T	U	W	V	B	A
S	C	A	R	E	D	F	J	R	M	O	K	S	T	L
E	M	B	A	R	R	A	S	S	M	E	N	T	F	M

7.3

1. (a) Kohlberg

   (b) post-conventional morality

2. (a) heteronomous, autonomous

   (b) universal, fixed

7.4

1. (a) ii

   (b) v

   (c) iv

   (d) i

   (e) iii

2. (a) Sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete, formal operational
   (b) conservation
   (c) egocentrism
   (d) deferred imitation
   (e) hypothetic-deductive reasoning

7.5

1. (a) comprehension
   (b) crying
   (c) critical
   (d) receptively and expressively
2. (a) True
   (b) False
   (c) False

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8

STAGES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT : -PRENATAL; AND -BIRTH TO THREE YEARS

When a family is getting ready for the addition of a new member in the family, all its members become enthusiastic to welcome the child and assume new roles including those of parents, grandparents and other relations. The expansion of the family, the addition of a new member, the anticipated entry of a child, and the responsibility of care and nurturance of another life is both exciting and daunting.

In this lesson, you will study about the growth and development of children from prenatal period to three years of age.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the care a mother needs during pregnancy and after child birth;
- describe the stages of development during prenatal period;
- discuss the ways to care for a neonate;
- highlight the milestones of child development during infancy;
- discuss the importance of early stimulation in children's development; and
- describe the milestones of development in different domains during toddlerhood.

8.1 DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN DURING PRENATAL STAGE

The average period of human pregnancy is 37 weeks to 41weeks. Babies born before 36 weeks of gestation are considered preterm and those born after 41 weeks are known as postterm babies.

Let us study about prenatal development.

8.1.1 Prenatal Development

After union with the sperm, the ovum enters the germinal period, a time of very rapid cell division, which lasts for about two weeks. This is followed by the embryonic period of about six weeks, during which structural development of the embryo takes place. From the beginning of the third month until birth, the time period is known as the foetal period. During this, the organs, muscles and systems begin to develop and function. Many of the processes that the organism will need in order to survive at birth are being developed at this time. The stages of prenatal development are presented pictorially as follows.

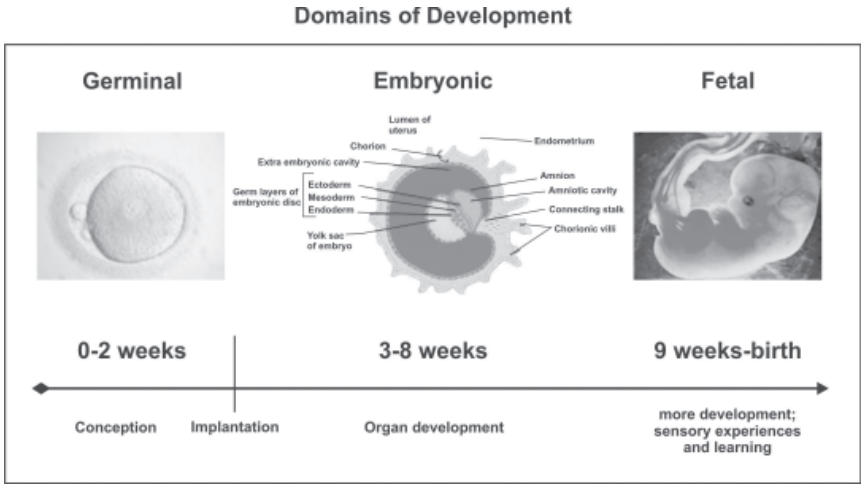
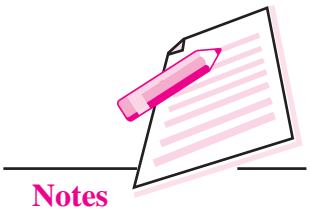


Fig. 8.1 Stages of Prenatal Development

Stage 1: The Germinal Stage

The two-week period after conception is called the germinal stage. Conception occurs when a sperm cell combines with an egg cell to form a zygote. About thirty-six hours after conception, the zygote begins to divide quickly. The resulting ball of cells moves along the mother's fallopian tube to the uterus. Around seven days after conception, the ball of cells starts to become embedded in the wall of the uterus. This process is called implantation and takes about a week to complete.



Notes

One key feature of the germinal stage is the formation of the placenta which is a thick, blood rich tissue lining the wall of the uterus. The placenta has two important functions:

- Passing oxygen and nutrients from the mother's blood into the embryo or foetus i.e. nourishes the developing embryo
- Removing waste materials from the embryo or foetus

Stage 2: The Embryonic Stage

The embryonic stage lasts from the end of the germinal stage to two months after conception. The developing ball of cells is now called an embryo. In this stage, all the major organs form, and the embryo becomes very fragile. At the end of the embryonic period, the embryo is only about an inch long.

Stage 3: The Foetal Stage

The last stage of prenatal development is the foetal stage, which lasts from two months after conception until birth. About one month into this stage, the sex organs of the foetus begin to form. The foetus quickly grows as bones and muscles form, and it begins to move inside the uterus. Organ systems develop further and start to function. During the last three months, the brain increases rapidly in size, an insulating layer of fat forms under the skin, and the respiratory and digestive systems start to work independently.

8.1.2 Factors Affecting Prenatal Growth and Development

Though all infants are expected to follow a 'normal' pattern of prenatal development, some factors might impinge normal growth. A teratogen is any disease, drug or other environment agent that can harm a developing embryo or foetus by causing physical deformation, retarded growth and damage to brain**.** Some of the teratogens and other factors that affect prenatal growth are discussed below:

- **Drugs:** Medical drugs such as antibiotics and non-prescribed illegal drugs such as marijuana, opiates and cocaine are potentially harmful for the foetus.
- **Alcohol and Smoking:** Intake of alcohol and smoking negatively affects the foetus. These can lead to mental retardation and slow physical growth. Excessive quantity of nicotine and caffeine may also affect the growing foetus.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Environmental hazards caused by modern day living, such as exposure to chemicals, radiations, extreme heat and humidity, can also cause prenatal mutations and deformities.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.1

Match Column A with Column B.

Column A	Column B
(a) Zygote	(i) 8weeks
(b) Implantation	(ii) when the zygote attaches to the uterine wall
(c) Embryo	(iii) result of fertilisation
(d) Placenta	(iv) thick, blood-rich tissue that lines the walls of the uterus during pregnancy and nourishes the embryo

8.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEWBORN

Characteristics of the newborn such as umbilical cord, skin, hair, head, weight, height, sleeping patterns and reflexes are discussed below:

- **Umbilicalcord**

  The umbilical cord of a newborn is bluish-white in colour. After birth, the umbilical cord is normally cut, leaving stub about one to two inches long. The umbilical stub dries out, shrivels, darkens and spontaneously falls off within three weeks. This later becomes the belly-button after it heals.

- **Skin**

  Newborns are wet, covered in streaks of blood and coated with a white substance known as vernix-caseosa, which is assumed to act as an antibacterial barrier. At birth, a newborn's skin is often grayish to dusky blue in colour. As soon as the newborn begins to breath, usually within a minute or two, the skin's colour reaches its normal tone.

- **Hair**

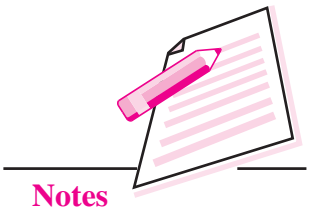
  Some newborns have fine, soft body hair called lanugo. They are particularly noticeable on the back, shoulders, forehead, ears and face of premature infants. Lanugo disappears within a few weeks of birth.

- **Head**

  A newborn's head is very large in proportion to the body and the cranium is enormous relative to the face.

- **Weight**

  The average birth weight of a full-term new born is approximately 2.5 to 3.5kgs.



- **Height**

  The baby's length will change much more slowly than the weight. Whatever be the baby's length at birth, approximately 2 cm (3/4") will be gained each month or just over 5 cm (2") in the first three months.

- **Sleeping Patterns**

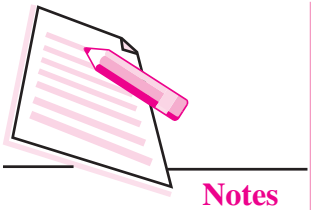
  Most newborn babies wake up every two to three hours throughout the day. Short stretches of sleep alternate with short period of wakefulness which is mainly for feeding and keeping babies dry and warm.

- **Reflexes**

  A reflex is an inborn, automatic or reflexive response to a particular form of stimulation. Reflexes are a neonate's organised pattern of behaviour. Infants rapidly shut and open their eyes on exposure to direct light, suck at things that touch their lips, grasp when an object is placed in their hands. All of these are some of the reflexes that babies are born with.

The table below highlights major reflexes of newborns:

	Reflexes in Newborns
Rooting	Infants turn the head towards things that touch the cheek
Stepping	Infants move their legs when held upright with feet touching the floor
Swimming	Infants paddle and kick in a sort of swimming motion when lying face down in a body of water
Moro	Activated when support for the neck and head is suddenly removed. Infants thrust their arms outward and appear to grasp onto something
Babinski	Infants fan out their toes in response to a stroke on the outside of her/his foot
Startle	Infants fling out their arms, arch the back and spread the fingers in response to a sudden noise
Eye Blink	Infants rapidly shut and open their eyes on exposure to direct light
Sucking	Infants suck at things that touch their lips
Palmar Grasp	When an object is placed in the infant's hand and strokes the palm, infants close the fingers and grasp it



Notes

INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.2

Match Column A with Column B.

Column A	Column B
(a) Moro reflex	(i) Neonates tendency to turn the head in direction when cheeks are touched
(b) Palmar Grasp	(ii) Infants rapidly shut and open their eyes on exposure to direct light
(c) Rooting	(iii) Babies try to grasp finger put in the palm
(d) Babinski	(iv) Support from neck is removed and baby extends the arms
(e) Eye Blink	(v) Fanning out toes in response to a stroke on foot

8.3 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT DURING INFANCY

Infancy has been defined as a period between birth and one year. At birth, infants display a set of inherited reflexes involving sucking, blinking and grasping. They are sensitive to light-dark visual contrasts and movements and show a noticeable preference for gazing at the human face. They also begin to recognize the human voice. During their first year, infants start to develop skills and competencies that become the foundation which they will use for the rest of their lives.

Let us go through the milestones attained by infants in the domains of development from birth to one year.

8.3.1 Milestones of Prenatal to Infancy

Infants grow at an amazing speed during their first year of life. Infants not only grow in the physical aspect like height and weight but also go through major achievements known as developmental milestones.

1. Fetal posture (newborn)
2. Holds chin up (1 month)
3. Holds chest up (2 months)
4. Sits when supported (4 months)
5. Sits alone (7 months)
6. Stands holding furniture (9 months)
7. Crawls (10 months)
8. Walks if led (11 months)
9- Stands alone (11 months)
10. Walks alone (12 months)

Fig. 8.2 Milestones in Physical Development

Fig. 8.3 Development of Senses

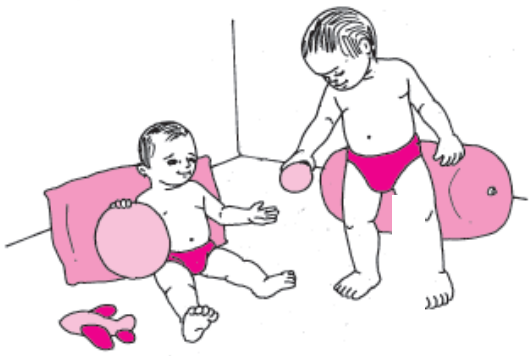


Fig. 8.4 Socio-emotional Development

Based on age ranges, the following section is divided into four parts to address the achievements of infants, in detail.

Birth to Three Months

- **Motor skills:** A newborn's head is unsteady at the beginning. By the age of three months, an infant tries to lift the head and turn it from one side to the other while lying on the stomach. Stretching and kicking by the baby are likely to get more vigorous. If you offer a toy, you will see the infant might grasp it and hold on tight for a few moments.

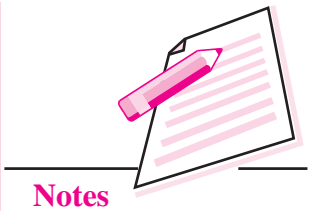
Notes

- **Hearing:** Within a few weeks from birth, the infant might respond to sounds by getting quiet or with a smile. Expect the infant to respond to the sound of the mother or other familiar voices.
- **Vision:** The infant will start to focus on the mother's face during feeding. By the age of three months, they might be easily distracted by an interesting sight or sound. Young children also begin to observe complex designs, various colours, sizes and shapes.
- **Communication:** Infants are able to communicate their needs by crying. By the age of two months, the infants smile on purpose, blow bubbles and coo when anyone talks or plays with them. They might even imitate facial expressions of people around them. Infants at this age also try to reach out to known adults when they need attention, security or comfort.

4 Months to 6 Months

Infants become more aware of the surrounding world as they start moving from third month of their lives. They begin exploring the environment around them with more curiosity.

- **Motor skills:** The infant's arms and legs wiggle and kick more purposefully now. You might notice that infants of this age start rocking on their stomach and eventually rollover. They gain muscle strength and have better head control. Most of the infants of this age raise their heads when lying face-down. They might even try to push themselves up or bear weight on their legs. By the age of six months, many infants begin sitting without support. Tip toeing or crawling follows soon after.
- **Eye-hand coordination:** Infants at this age can grasp an object like a rattle. They also try to hold fingers of people around them. Anything within the infant's reach is likely to end up in the mouth. You might notice infants pull objects closer. This requires them to coordinate what they see and hold. Following this, they start transferring objects from one hand to the other.
- **Vision:** Infants at this age begin to distinguish between strange and familiar faces. You might notice that infants concentrate on toys, observe their fingers and toes and stare at their reflection. Most infants of this age turn the head toward bright colours. If a ball is rolled across the floor, the infant will turn the head to follow the action.
- **Communication:** Infants at this age often begin to babble, gurgle and laugh. They respond to and imitate the facial expressions and sounds of others around them. They might babble and then pause, waiting for others to respond. There is increase in memory and attention span. They begin



Notes

to pick up the components of speech and the way words form sentences. They even start recognising their names.

7 Months to 10 Months

Increased capacities in almost all domains of development allow infants to do more with their bodies. They start to interact better with the objects and with people around them.

- **Motor skills:** By this age, most infants can roll over in both directions even in their sleep. Some infants can sit on their own, while others need a little support. One might notice that infants begin to rock back and forth, or even crawl across the room. Some infants start making efforts to pull themselves to a standing position.
- **Eye- hand coordination:** Infants start showing more refined fine motor skills. Most infants at this age transfer objects from one hand to another or directly to their mouths. Pulling objects closer with hands gives way to more- refined movements, such as picking up objects with just the thumb and forefinger. This improving dexterity helps the infant to handle a spoon and soft finger foods.
- **Communication:** Infants now communicate through sounds, gestures and facial expressions. One can hear plenty of laughing and squealing from them. Infants might even respond to their own name. They can distinguish emotions by tone of voice. They also try to repeat the sounds they hear.

10 Months to 12 Months

As children reach their first birthday, their actions become goal oriented and they display relative precision in executing their plans.

- **Motor skills:** Most infants at this age can sit without help and pull themselves to a standing position. Infants might use various forward movements to explore new territory. Creeping, crawling and cruising along the furniture will eventually lead to walking. By 12 months, the infants might take their first steps without support.
- **Eye-hand coordination:** Most infants at this age can feed themselves finger foods by grasping items between the thumb and forefinger. They bang blocks or other objects together to enjoy the sound that results and stack objects or nest them inside one another.
- **Cognitive skills:** You have read in the lesson 'Domains of Development' that infants understanding of object permanence improves, they are able to easily find hidden objects. Although they might cry if the mother is

leaving the room, the infant soon begins to realise that the mother exists even when she is out of sight. They start imitating actions at this age like brushing their hair, pushing buttons on the remote control, or pretending to talk on the phone like adults around them do. Infants are able to look at the correct object, such as a toy, when mentioned.

- **Language:** Most infants at this age respond to simple verbal requests and understand words for familiar people and events. They become skilled at various gestures, such as shaking their head to convey, 'no', pointing at something that they want to reach out to, or waving.

ACTIVITY 8.1

Observe a child in the neighbourhood of the age of up to six months and record the milestones of various developmental domains:

Physical and Motor
Cognitive
Language

8.4 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT DURING TODDLERHOOD

The stage of life between one and three years of age is called toddlerhood. The growth and development of children at this stage is very rapid. Children want to be a part of whatever adults around them do. As they become more independent, they insist on trying to do many things by themselves. They are probably interested in everything and everyone, especially if it is something new or different.

Children show development in each domain such as physical-motor, language cognitive and social-emotional as discussed below.

8.4.1 Physical-motor Development

Physically, toddlers gain weight, height and their body proportions change rapidly in comparison to infants. Due to this, toddlers attain and practice gross and fine motor skills. The skills and coordination of toddlers increase manifold during this stage. They display their growing control and independence on their bodies in everyday tasks and especially when they play. Some of the milestones of physical-motor development that toddlers attain during this age are:

Gross Motor Skills

- Walk on their own
- Walk backwards
- Can pick up toys while standing
- Push and pull objects
- Climb on and off furniture
- May begin to run

Toddler years (1 to 3) are a time of rapid growth and development in different domains.

Fig. 8.5 A toddler (1-3 years)

Fine Motor Skills

- Scribble and paint
- May use one hand more than the other
- Grasp, hold and throw a ball
- Turnover and pour out contents from containers
- Feed themselves

8.4.2 Socio-emotional Development

Toddlers show a range of emotions including fear, happiness and joy. They start expressing complex emotions such as jealousy, affection and shame by the age of three years. They also show awareness of what others are feeling and recognize their mental states. They enjoy playing by themselves and /or next to other children. But they have difficulty in sharing toys. Toddlers love to assert themselves by saying, "no". They want to be independent, yet they are dependent. Sometimes, they do the opposite of what is asked and can become frustrated easily. Play during toddlerhood provides the toddlers an opportunity to develop socially.

Here are some of the milestones of socio-emotional development:

- Recognise themselves in the mirror
- Can identify family members
- Enjoy playing with other people and may cry when play stops
- Become more expressive with face and body
- Imitate some facial expressions
- Develop a sense of attachment and security with the mother or the primary caregiver

Notes

8.4.3 Cognitive Development

Toddlers begin making sense of their environment rather haphazardly but soon they learn to coordinate sensory information more effectively.

As Piaget believes, toddlers show first intellectual behaviour and are capable of independent thinking by this age. They begin deliberately and purposefully experimenting on their environment. They try out new activities through trial-and-error and mentally represent and anticipate events. However, their attention is bound by what is concretely present in their environment. They cannot think in abstract terms. Toddlers at this age are able to think about doing something before actually doing it.

At this age, children mostly engage in parallel play where they play near other children but they do not play together. They are curious, can follow simple directions but have short attention spans. They imitate others in their environment and begin to include a second person in pretend play.

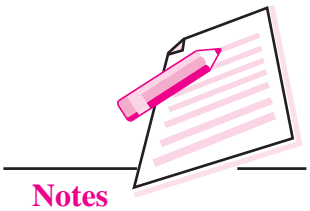
Some of the milestones of cognitive achievements of toddlers are:

- Name familiar people and objects
- Find objects when hidden i.e. object permanence develops
- Capable of differed imitation
- Understand and respond properly to words and commands
- Distinguish between “you” and “me” and use pronouns “me” and “mine”
- May begin to match similar objects
- Show goal directed behaviour

8.4.5 Language Development, Communication and Emergent Literacy

Language is the most important tool for communication and thus, understanding the development of language among young children becomes essential. The period between one to three years of age is when toddler’s understanding and use of words builds rapidly.

At one year of age, most children can say two or three recognisable words and by the time they are three years old, they start talking using two or three sentences. Between the ages of one and two years, children acquire new words on a regular basis. Initially, they can combine two to three words and then move on to make complete sentences. Between the ages of two and three years, most toddlers learn about 300 words.Toddlers start to understand simple questions and are able to follow simple commands.



Notes

You might have heard children of this age saying, “No”, or "I can do it!" or "Let me do it." This shows that the toddler is utilising language as a tool to show independence.

Toddlers listen to everything said to them and often understand more than adults think they do. They are sensitive to the way someone speaks to them. When toddlers learn to communicate well with words, it becomes easier for them to get help when they need.

Let us study some of the milestones of language development.

1 - 2 Years	2 - 3 Years
• Use many different consonant sounds • Point to and name specific objects they want • Follow simple commands like, "Roll the ball" and understand simple questions like, "Where’s your shoe?" • Use one- or two-word combinations like, "more cookie" or "no juice" • Know a few parts of the body and can point to them when asked • Point to pictures, when named, in books • Use the words ‘no’, and ‘more’ • Recognise, name and pickout common objects • Enjoy simple stories,songs and rhymes	• Have a word for almost everything • Use two- or three-word phrases to talk about and ask for things • Speak in a way that is understood by family members and friends • Name objects to ask for them or to direct attention to them • Answer routine questions like, "What is that?", or "What is your name?", or "How old are you?" • Follow directions having no more than two steps, such as, "Find your shoes and get your dress." • Begin to use many different parts of spoken language: eg. Plurals: ‘cookies’; Prepositions: 'in the jar’; Modifiers: ‘some’, ‘a lot’; Possessives: ‘mine’, ‘his’; Adjectives : ‘pretty’; Adding -ed’ to verbs to show past tense • Scribble, colour and draw

INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.3

State whether the following statements are true or false :

(a) Toddlers can pick up toys while standing.

(b) Three year olds do not recognise themselves in a mirror.

(c) A three year old's speech is not easily understood by the family.

(d) Toddlers try out new activities and learn through trial and error.

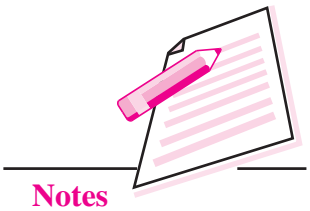
ACTIVITY 8.2

Observe a toddler and comment on the language and physical development.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt that:

- Stages of prenatal development include:
  - Germinal (0-2 weeks)
  - Embryonic (3-8 weeks)
  - Foetal (9 weeks to birth)
- A teratogen is any disease, drug or other environment agent that can harm a developing embryo or foetus by causing physical deformation, retarded growth and damage to brain.
- Newborns are characterized by the umbilical cord, skin, hair, head, weight, height, sleeping patterns and reflexes.
- There are milestones of development of infants in different areas such as motor skills, hearing, vision and communication.
- Providing stimulating inputs to children during their early years of life for their optimum growth and holistic development is called early stimulation.
- Growth and development during toddlerhood is very rapid. There are milestones of development in physical-motor, socio-emotional, language and cognitive domain. Children are expected to achieve age specific milestones in each of the domains of development. Any lag or developmental delay is required to be immediately addressed.



Notes

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Aarti and her mother are playing with a toy. Her mother hides the toy behind her back. Aarti then begins to look for the toy behind her mother. What is Aarti's approximate age? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Trace the physical development marking milestones attained by infants.
3. What criteria will you use to tell whether a newborn is healthy and is developing normally?
4. Describe how a child is likely to respond to or interact with a rattle at each of the following ages:
   - 2 weeks
   - 3months
   - 6months
   - 10months
   - 15months
   - 21months
5. What are the major environmental factors that can harm a developing embryo and foetus?
6. In your neighbourhood, you observe a 10 months old child who keeps lying on the cot all the time. The child does not make any effort to stand. What advice will you give to the parents of the child?
7. Comment on the language milestones attained by infants.
8. What cognitive milestones are achieved during infancy?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

8.1

(a) iii

(b) ii

(c) i

(d) iv

8.2

(a) iv

(b) iii

(c) i

(d) v

(e) ii

8.3

(a) True

(b) False

(c) False

(d) True

GLOSSARY

- **Immunoglobulins** are antibodies that pass from the mother to the baby and provide passive immunity to the baby, which protects the baby from a wide variety of bacterial and viral illnesses.

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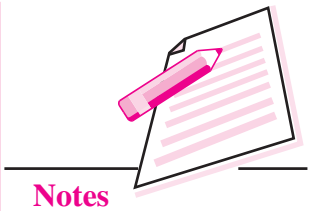

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9

STAGES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT: THREE TO SIX YEARS AND SIX TO EIGHT YEARS

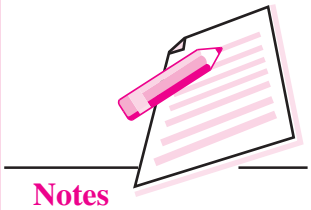
As children reach the age of bracket of three to six years, they get ready to be placed in preschools. Perhaps this is the reason why at this stage, they are at times said to be in the preschool stage. Thereafter, as children reach the age range of six to eight years, they are considered to be in the Early Primary stage. In the last lesson, you have learnt about the journey of a growing foetus, birth and infancy. You have also read about the developmental path and milestones from birth to three years. In the present lesson, you will know about the pattern of development in different domains during the preschool stage and the early primary stage.

Let us study about these in detail.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the developmental characteristics and needs of three to six year-old children;
- describe the pattern of development in relation to milestones in different areas in three to six year old children;
- describe the pattern of child development in different areas during six to eight years;
- describe the characteristics and developmental needs of children in age the bracet of six to eight years; and
- discuss the importance of play in the development of children.



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9.1 DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN DURING AGES THREE TO SIX YEARS

Pre-school age is the time for achieving muscle development and coordination, and also to build abilities to think and speak. Their power of observation, memory and verbal skills improves rapidly. This aids in better understanding and adapting themselves to the world around them. During preschool years, children learn essential life skills like dressing up and feeding themselves and thus grow independent in a number of ways. This is also the time when children learn to separate from parents and family in preparation for school.

The sections that follow describe physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language development of preschool children.

9.1.1 Physical and Motor Development

Children in the age group of three to six years grow slower than infants but their growth is rather steady. The growth made by them in muscle development and coordination ensures that they can physically do a lot of things that previously they were unable to achieve. Generally, three to six year old children gain about four to five pounds per year and grow approximately two to three inches per year. Now, they need less sleep than they did. At this stage, children's muscular and skeletal growth progresses and they become physically stronger. The capacity of their respiratory, circulatory and excretory system develops and this promotes development of an array of motor skills in them. Since their eye-hand coordination improves, this gives them an edge at engaging in a number of tasks such as running, throwing, skipping and jumping. Along with these gross motor skills that require large muscles, they also become efficient in using their fine motor skills that require engagement of their fine muscles. Since now they are able to use their fine muscles with precision, it makes them skilled at drawing with crayons, use a spoon to feed themselves, button their clothes and tie shoelaces. You must have also observed that the walls of a pre-schooler's home are often coloured with crayon marks. This is because children during this age can physically coordinate and pull themselves up to the wall and use fine motor muscles to stroke the wall with crayons. Some of the gross and fine motor skills attained in this age are:

Gross Motor Development

- Becoming more skilled at running, jumping, throwing, kicking
- Catching a bounced ball
- Pedalling a tricycle at around three years; becoming able to steer well at around age four years

Notes

- Hopping on one foot at around four years, and later balancing on one foot for up to five seconds
- Doing a heel-to-toe walk at around age five years

Fine Motor Development

- Drawing a circle, square, triangle
- Beginning to use children's blunt-tip scissors and eventually cutting a straight line
- Self-dressing with supervision
- Putting on clothes properly
- Managing a spoon and fork neatly while eating
- Spreading with a knife

9.1.2 Socio-emotional Development

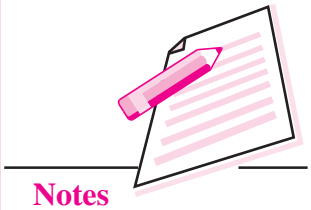
Children's understanding about themselves, their feeling and how they sustain relationships with others are a part of their socio-emotional development. Pre-schoolers often wonder 'who they are'. This is the first question to entangle the mystery of self. Our self-concept is constituted by who we are; how we see our abilities; what characteristics we use to describe ourselves.

In toddlerhood, children develop self-awareness. As children reach pre-school age, their descriptions about themselves become more detailed and comprehensive. They are now able to associate a number of characteristics that define them. They mostly focus on observable, concrete and physical characteristics about themselves. They often talk about their name, what they possess, their toys and their family members when they describe themselves. They also mention the achievements of these ages like, "I run fast".

This is also an age where gender identity takes shape. Children of this age are able to classify themselves as male or female and show preferences for wearing clothes and dressing appropriate for their own gender. They use gender appropriate language and their play also tends to reflect gendered practices.

Preschoolers learn social skills needed to play and work with other children. As time passes, although four to five year olds may start playing games with rules, their rules are likely to change and they are able to cooperate better with peers.

Children at preschool age start understanding their own emotions and can talk about their feelings. They understand that emotions may be aroused under certain



conditions and they are now able to express and verbalise their emotions. They have a vocabulary of words associated with emotions. It is worthwhile mentioning that at this stage, they may not be able to name and understand complex emotions and hence may need assistance from parents and other adults in managing their emotions. During experiences that bring on aggression or shame, they may not know how to act.

According to Erikson (1950), this is the stage when children want to take initiative in planning and doing things for themselves. Being able to do that brings positive feelings in children, but if children are constantly stopped from doing things on their own, they may develop guilt within themselves and this may be detrimental to their growing sense of self.

Some of the socio-emotional skills of preschoolers are :

- describing oneself
- emerging concept of self
- talking about one's feelings and emotions
- complex emotions such as guilt, shame and pride emerge
- telling stories and narrating events
- display initiative, curiosity and exploration

9.1.3 Cognitive Development

Preschoolers are often filled with questions about the world around them. They may sometimes apply rudimentary logic and at times may look confused about particular situations. The preschooler's growing awareness about the world around them, their logics and insights present to us the gateway to their minds.

In this section, you will read how development of cognition takes place in pre-schoolers and how their growing cognitive abilities make them understand the world around them.

The complexity of children's thoughts increase considerably by the end of infancy and at the beginning of pre-school. You have read in an earlier lesson that according to Jean Piaget, the period between two and seven years of age is termed as pre-operational stage. At this stage, their thinking is illogical, rigid and unsystematic. One of the abilities that develops is their ability to engage in symbolic thought i.e. they no more need to be in actual contact with an object, person or event in order to think about it. In fact, they can imagine about an object or person and use their representational abilities to remember and conclude about the properties of that object or person.

Notes

Symbolic Function: Preschoolers make and register an image of an item in their mind and even in the absence of any sensory cues from their environment, and they can still remember about them. They have an ability to name these objects using symbols such as words and numbers.

Spatial Thinking: Children in this age group become better at understanding spatial relationships. They can understand that a picture represents something that is not present but may exist. However, they may not be able to correctly understand the relationship between the picture and the actual object.

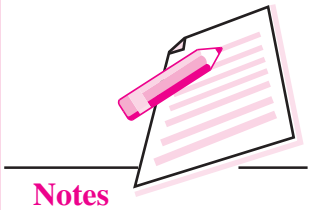
Causality: Children at this stage are able to think about causes of familiar events. They can comprehend that all living things grow in size when they receive nutrition. They reach such reasoning by their observation of the natural environment coupled with what they hear from their parents and others about such events. However, they cannot yet reason logically about the cause and effect. They may link two events that occur close together in time or space to be related as cause and effect. For example, just because the preschooler had a bad thought just before the sibling fell sick, a preschooler may relate the negative thoughts with sibling falling ill.

Categorisation and Identities: Categorisation refers to the children's ability to identify similarities and differences in objects. Children at this stage have not yet fully mastered this but they may classify objects as good, bad, friend, non-friend, edible, inedible, utensil, furniture and so forth.

In addition to that, they may attribute life-like characteristics to non-living objects and assume them to be living. This cognitive limitation was termed animism by Piaget.

You have studied in the lesson, 'Domains of Development' that preschool children develop a better understanding of identities i.e. they understand that objects remain the same even if they change their physical appearance or form and size. This helps them to see the order and predictability in the world around them. But preschoolers' understanding of identities is not fully developed. They lack the ability to conserve. They may believe that out of two rows of coins, a longer looking row of coins has more coins (conservation of number); when a stick is placed ahead of the other, even when the two stick are of same length, preschool children may believe that one is longer than the other. They also focus their thought on only one aspect of a situation and are not able to take into account three to four aspects of a situation simultaneously.

Egocentrism: You have already studied that according to Piaget, preschool children centre on their own viewpoint and cannot understand another person's perspective. To study this, Piaget designed a Three Mountain task, where a doll



was placed opposite to where the child was sitting and the child was asked questions about how the things would appear or look to the doll. Piaget found that the children did not respond as to how the things would appear to the doll. Instead, they answered from their own perspective and imagined things from their own viewpoint. This is called egocentrism.

With age, children's cognitive abilities expand further and they are able to overcome the cognitive limitations to this stage.

Let us now try to understand development of language abilities in preschool children.

9.1.4 Language Development, Communication and Emergent Literacy

As stated earlier in this lesson, pre-schoolers are full of questions. Asking questions is not merely a function of growing cognitive abilities but is also made possible by growing language competencies that children acquire. Vocabularies of pre school children expand in this age and they are able to understand and use words in everyday talk much easily. Preschoolers also quickly understand the meaning of any difficult word that they hear for the first time. This is called fast mapping. It helps them to learn new words rather quickly. They also have a natural tendency to understand how words can be combined to form meaningful sentences.

By pre-school age, most children are able to combine two to three words into sentences. They show a growing awareness of the rules to form sentences. At three, they begin to use plurals, possessives and the past tense. They are able to appreciate the usage of words like, I, me, you and we and use them appropriately during their everyday conversations.

Children at this stage also become competent in pragmatics, i.e. the practical usage of language. They know how to speak with whom. They become skilled with the social side of language. They also become proficient in understanding social rules and practically using long sentences to make demands, tell a story and so forth. They become receptive to social cues while communicating. If they seem to feel that other people cannot understand what they are saying, then they tend to repeat themselves or explain themselves differently.

All children do not follow a regular developmental trajectory. Some children may have delayed language development. Adequate language inputs in the early years of life help children achieve milestones of language development.

Some of the language competencies of pre-schoolers are:

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- Using pronouns and prepositions appropriately
- Making three-word simple sentences
- Signifying size relationships eg. small, big
- Following a three step command
- Counting until 10
- Naming four colours
- Enjoying rhymes and word play
- Responding to "why" questions
- Talking to oneself

INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.1

Fill in the blanks.

(a) Attributing life-like characteristics to non-living objects is called ..... .

(b) ..... refers to children's ability to identify similarities and differences in objects.

(c) Preschoolers quickly understand the meaning of any difficult word that they hear for the first time, from the context of the sentences. This is called.....

(d) ..... deals with practical usage of language.

9.2 DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN DURING SIX TO EIGHT YEARS

Middle childhood brings many changes in the lives of children. Physical, social and cognitive skills develop rapidly at this time. In terms of cognitive capacities, they are now able to remember and memorise more. This time is critical for children to develop confidence in all areas of life and attain independence and industry. Developing independence from family becomes more important now. During this period, children come into regular contact with the larger world outside. Friendships become more important and peers start playing a very crucial role.

Let us now study the developmental milestones of the early primary stage.

9.2.1 Physical Development and Motor Development

At this age, children grow about one to three inches per year. They start gaining weight faster at the age of eight to nine years. Their large muscles including those of arms and legs are more developed than small muscles. At this stage, children engage in a lot of physical play. They can bounce a ball and run, but it is difficult to do both at the same time.

Fig. 9.1 Children at Play

Some of the physical capacities of children during this phase are:

- Slow and consistent growth
- Muscle mass and strength
- 'Baby fat' decreases
- Muscle tone improves
- Control over body movements increases

9.2.2 Socio-emotional Development

In this stage, children develop relatively complete concepts of themselves. They develop a growing understanding about one's place in the world. They start to feel about how they look and how they are growing. They become more realistic about their abilities and capacities. Their descriptions about themselves are based on both their explicit (such as physical capacities and possessions) and internal characteristics (such as, "I am good").

Notes

Children at this stage can verbalise conflicting emotions. They also understand more complex emotions, such as confusion and excitement. Although they can verbalise the importance of their family for them, yet they also value their privacy. This can be seen in their preference and claim for their own spaces and toys. As their peer groups are expanding at this time, they engage in competition and play competitive games with their friends. They uphold their friendships and value teamwork.

Some of the other socio-emotional capacities of children during this phase are:

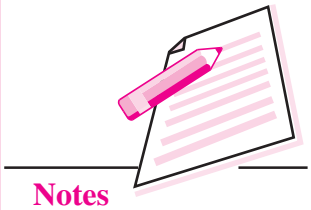
- Developing sense of right and wrong
- Wanting emotional freedom and space from parents
- Becoming better at controlling and concealing feelings
- Beginning to form a broader self-concept based on recognition of one's strengths and weaknesses, especially with regard to social, academic and athletic skills
- Sustaining peer group interactions and friendships

9.2.3 Cognitive Development

In middle childhood, children start thinking more logically than before. Their thinking becomes flexible but they are able to think about concrete situations only. They have yet not mastered abstract thought. They can now think of more than one aspect of an object, although they have not mastered it at this stage. Now then can remember routes to familiar destinations and have an idea of how long it takes to reach from one place to another. They may walk back from school independently. They are now also able to conserve number, length, liquid, matter, weight, area and volume. They also have reversible thought. Children of this age are no more egocentric.

Some the cognitive abilities of this age are:

- Ability to describe experiences and talk about thoughts
- Ability to focus on the past and future as well as the present
- Increasing attention span and developing selective attention
- Planning ahead
- Questioning based on observation and anticipation of events
- Ability to read and write and to acquire information through the media



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9.2.4 Language Development

Children at this stage become skilled at the use of language. They are able to pick up the nuances of language and use them appropriately at appropriate places. They are able to appreciate humour and gather conversational skills like turn taking. They can sustain conversations on a single topic for considerable time. Their vocabulary and syntax improves. They add new words to their repertoire and are able to use them aptly in different social situations. They start understanding the social usage of words i.e. what and how to speak with different persons such as parents, teachers, siblings and friends. They also show increased appreciation for hidden intent of words.

Some of their competencies related to the language development during this stage are:

- Comprehension and use of language becomes more sophisticated
- Share opinions in clear speech
- Conversational and narrative skills improve
- Try to visualise what is being described
- Invent new words and phrases

INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.2

Match Column A with Column B to understand the development of children during the early primary stage.

Column A	Column B
(i) Physical development	(a) Invent new phrases and words
(ii) Social development	(b) Can remember routes to familiar places
(iii) Emotional development	(c) Engaged in competition
(iv) Language development	(d) Verbalise conflictive emotions
(v) Cognitive development	(e) Grow about 1" – 3" per year

9.3 IMPORTANCE OF PLAY DURING EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play offers many valuable opportunities to children that contribute to their development and learning. Evidence shows that play can support learning across physical, social emotional and cognitive areas of development. Particularly in

Notes

the first three years, play helps children to learn about the world through listening, looking, touching, tasting and smelling. During play, children also increase their social competence and emotional maturity.

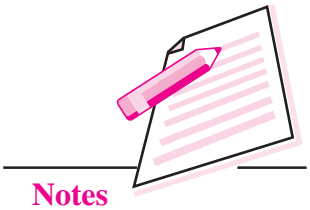
Play is an essential and critical part of all children's development. Play is how children learn to socialise, think, solve problems, mature and most importantly, to have fun. All early childhood practitioners need to know the significance of play and implement a play-based programme. According to Froebel, play is not a trivial pursuit but a serious occupation for a child. It has a deep significance on the development of children. Maria Montessori also stresses free and spontaneous play as an important activity for the development of children. Piaget defines play consisting of responses repeated purely for functional pleasures.

Young children are curious beings, discovering and investigating the world around them. Play is the tool for young children to explore the mysteries of the physical and social worlds. In play, children learn collaboration and conflict resolution with friends as they investigate the properties of equipment, materials, and routines. Through the phenomenon of play, children develop and learn as they participate in activities in every area of the classroom. At different ages, children indulge in different types of play.

Let us read the role of play in early childhood development.

- Play lays the foundation for literacy. Through play children learn to make and practice new sounds. They try out new vocabulary on their own or with friends, and exercise their imagination.
- Play is learning. Play nurtures development and fulfils children's inborn need to learn. Play takes many forms, from shaking a rattle to peek-a-boo to hide-and-seek. Play can be done by a child alone, with another child, in a group or with an adult.
- Play gives children choice. Having enough toys or activities to choose from will allow children to express themselves.
- Play gives children space to practice physical movement, balance and to test their own limits.
- Play allows adults to learn children's body language.
- Play is fun. Learning to play well, both by themselves and with others, sets children up to be contented and sociable.

Let us now study the significance of play in promoting holistic development among children.



Physical and Motor Development

Play is significant to physical development and without it the body would not mature it normally would. In this age of obesity and processed foods, getting out and running or participating in a sport is essential to the health and liveliness of children. Play contributes to children's fine and gross motor development and body awareness as they actively use their bodies. Learning to use a writing tool, such as a marker, is an example of fine motor development through play. The natural progression in small motor development is from scribbles to shapes and forms to representational pictures. Playing with writing tools helps children refine their fine motor skills. Gross motor development, such as hopping and skipping, develops in a similar fashion. When children first learn to hop, they practice hopping on different feet or just for the pure joy of hopping. Using their bodies during play also enables them to feel physically confident, secure and self-assured. Play provides an outlet for all of the energy that children have. Here, it strengthens their smaller and larger motor skills and can build stamina and strength.

Socio-emotional Development

Play is vital to children's social development. During play, children also increase their social competence and emotional maturity. Psychologists contend that school success largely depends on children's ability to interact positively with their peers and adults. While at play, children are in control of the environment around them. This fosters self-esteem. They take part in different activities that might make them feel new emotions. Since play allows children to explore their feelings, they learn how to cope with feelings such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, excitement, frustration, and stress. Play also helps increase children's concentration and cooperation with others. Through play, children learn how to relate to one another and form ideas about how to negotiate roles, follow rules and observe group dynamics. Allowing them to create their own roles helps cultivate friendships and this is one of the most rewarding outcomes of play.

Cognitive Development

Children learn essential concepts such as counting, colours, and problem-solving through play. Their thinking and reasoning skills improve by engaging and participating in play-based activities. Since, in early childhood, 'play' is equivalent to 'work,' hence, it is important to allow them to engage in play in order to gain these new skills.

Language Development

Play helps children internalise the many rule systems associated with the language

they are speaking.So, communication is essential in play It also helps them generate multiple ways of expressing their thinking. Play is their arena for experimenting with and coming to understand words, syllables, sounds, and grammatical structure. During play, children learn to use language for different purposes in a variety of settings and with different people. In play with others, children often use language to ask for materials or ask a question. They seek information, provide information to others and express ideas and during the play. Children of all ages enjoy playing with language because, in doing so, they feel in control of it. Language play for children during this period manifests itself in the jokes, riddles, jump rope rhymes and games they use.

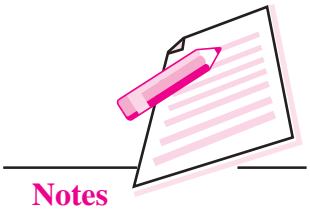
Art and Aesthetic Appreciation

We have talked about the important role of creative thought and expression in children's development and learning. In 1958, Sigmund Freud suggested that every child at play, "behaves like a creative writer, in that he creates a world of his own, or, rather, rearranges the things of his world in a new way which pleases him." The creative person does the same as the child at play. So, play provides an opportunity to children to appreciate art and use it in their environment.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt that:

- Children in the age group of three to six years grow and develop at a rather steady pace. They develop small and large muscles that help them with become physically stronger.
- Growing physical capacities of three to six year olds help them become better at doing everyday activities such as feeding themselves, buttoning clothes, tying shoelaces and so forth.
- Preschoolers can describe themselves in terms of their name, family members, their possessions etc.
- Children in preschool age lack cognitive capacities such as conservation and abstract thinking but they are able to use rudimentary logics that are bound by the outer appearance of the objects.
- Preschoolers acquire words and social understanding of the usage of words rather quickly.
- During middle childhood, children gain greater control over their bodies.



Notes

- Children in the age group of six to eight years describe themselves in terms of their physical capacities, possessions and internal characteristics. They are more realistic in their descriptions about themselves.
- In middle childhood, children start thinking more logically than before but they remain bound to the physical appearance of objects. They are not yet capable of reversibility, conservation and abstract thinking.
- Six to eight year olds become skilled at the use of language. They make rather creative sentences.
- Play contributes to overall development of children. They develop capacities in all domains of development.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by play? Discuss the role of play in early childhood development.
2. Explain the different aspects of cognitive development of preschoolers.
3. List the abilities of a seven year old child in the following domains:
   (i) Cognitive
   (ii) Language
   (iii) Socio-emotional
4. Make a comparative milestone chart of three year old child and six year old child.
5. Briefly explain the following :
   (i) Symbolic thought
   (ii) Spatial thinking
   (i) Causality
   (ii) Categorisation and Identities
   (iii) Private speech

ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

9.1

(a) animism

Notes

(b) Categorisation

(c) Fast mapping

(d) Pragmatics

9.2

(i) e, (ii) c, (iii) d, (iv) a, (v) b

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10

CARE OF CHILDREN IN EARLY YEARS

It is well established that children grow from the time of conception. It is also believed that their learning starts even before they are born. Current research has repeatedly conveyed that an interactive environment, stimulation, warmth and care are essential for children to grow and learn. Earliest care and experiences affect children's development and the nature of interactions build a strong orientation towards the way children think. In this lesson, you will study the care of children during their early years.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the principles of caregiving;
- discuss the importance of health, hygiene and feeding practices in the first three years;
- explain the significance of sensory stimulation as the base for curiosity, motivation and learning;
- identify the different kinds of caregiving systems;
- describe the need for continuity and consistency in caregiving; and
- state the significance of parent-teacher collaboration for childcare.

10.1 PRINCIPLES OF CAREGIVING OF CHILDREN UNDER THREE YEARS

The first three years are often called the foundation years as incredible growth takes place in all domains of development. The most important early experiences

are provided by parenting and the nurturing home environment. Children are able to form relationships by consistent and continuous presence of caregivers who talk, feed, play and tend to give love and care. It is imperative to ensure quality childcare as it has direct impact on how children will learn and build healthy relationships. Let us understand the key principles of caregiving.

Principle 1: Supportive and Responsive Environment

A supportive environment and responsive care provides a secure base and routine for children who are completely dependent on caregivers for all sensory interactions. Regular response for feeding, bodily needs and tactile comfort are primary needs of children. Besides physical care, any secure relationship will help them regulate their emotions and behaviour.

Principle 2: Responsive Relationships and Strong Life Skills

Caregivers promote healthy brain development and protect children from anxiety and uncertainty by giving them warmth and through interactions. Caregiving practices must include eye contact with children and pleasant gestures or a hug every time they babble, cry etc. This helps form new neural connections in the brain leading to acquisition of better cognitive abilities and socio-emotional skills. Children must slowly develop independence in performing various tasks and activities. In this process, caregivers must establish routines, organise activities that foster creative play and model social behaviour so that children can exercise their developing skills. This helps children cope with stress, build curiosity and develop a will for constructive work as well as a desire for building social relationships.

Principle 3: Reduce Sources of Stress

Reducing stress implies responding to children on demand, reaching out with multi- sensorial interactions such as audio, visual, sense of touch, suckling experiences and kinaesthetic experiences. Leaving children alone or ignoring them can create disturbance and obstruct their growth and development. It is important for caregivers to protect children from external loud noise, disturbing visuals and harsh fast movements thus, keeping them away from any form of stress.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.1

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Children are not affected by their external environment.
2. Children gain from things to see, hear and feel from the time of birth.
3. Anxiety and stress can impact later learning among children.
4. Primary relation for children is significant for emotional wellbeing.
5. Physical care of children is a primary need as it may affect other areas of development.

Notes

10.2 IMPORTANCE OF MEETING PHYSICAL NEEDS

Keeping the principles of childcare in mind, it is important to understand the care practices in relation to domains of development. First and foremost, children need to be fed, be physically and emotionally secure and be given stimulation. In this section, you will study some basic ways to ensure growth, survival and development of children.

10.2.1 Nutritious food

Breast milk is best for babies. The benefits of breastfeeding have been known for decades in all the cultures across the world. It is proved as a complete food in itself and babies do not require nutrition supplements until they are six months of age. It protects them from infection and develops their immunity. It also reduces risk of infant morbidity and mortality. In addition, breast milk fulfills babies' need for the sense of touch and feel of comfort with their mothers. After six months, weaning may be started through the transition from mother's milk to semi-solid foods. Weaning foods are semi-solid foods that support the transition from breast milk to regular food. In many cultures, there are ceremonies to announce the weaning. Also, different cultures have prescribed different diets and weaning foods such as dalia, sooji kheer, khichdi, ragi etc.

Care of lactating mothers is essential as babies are dependent on mothers for their nutritional needs. During lactation, they need to eat a healthy diet to provide sufficient milk for the child. The diet should include cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables, nuts and dry fruits and dairy products. Non- vegetarian mothers should eat meat, fish and eggs. Mothers should take plenty of fluids such as clean drinking water, milk and fruit juices to keep themselves hydrated.

10.2.2 Protection, Adequate Sleep and Exercise

Children build their trust with the world with sensory inputs both in care and in interactions. Holding them with care and interacting with them are of great value as this provides them physical and emotional safety. Caregivers must ensure comfortable clothing, adequate sleep and exercise for children. Let us learn about them.

- *Clothing*: Clothes for newborn should be soft and loose. In some families, newborn babies are made to wear a garment made out of an older person's used clothing. These are to ensure that children will be protected from stiff materials as their skin is soft and delicate. They should also be kept clean and not left wet for long.
- *Sleep*: We all know that babies sleep for almost 18 hours. This reduces gradually. Sleep is necessary for babies to grow just as sensory stimulation is essential for the brain to make neural connections. How much babies sleep varies depending on their age. As children grow, the total amount

of sleep gradually decreases, but the length of night time sleep increases.

- *Exercise:* Babies in the first four weeks only move their limbs. This helps them to get an idea of space. Slowly, they begin to roll over, stay on their stomach and be able to attempt creeping, crawling and pulling themselves to a standing position. Games and play with infants are good exercises.

10.2.3 Immunization and Promotive Health Care

Immunization is the process that makes a person immune or resistant to an infectious disease, typically by the administration of a vaccine. These vaccines stimulate the body's own immune system to protect the person against subsequent infection or disease. Immunisation prevents children from getting diseases for which there are often no medical treatments. It is given high priority in the care of infants as it can protect them from life- threatening diseases. Soon after birth, an immunisation card is prepared for the newborn to get vaccinated as per schedule. The following table shows the age at which each vaccination has to be administered.

Age	Vaccine
Birth	BCG, OPV, Hepatitis B, HPV
6 Weeks	DPT, OPV, HiB, Pneumococcal, Hepatitis B
10 Weeks	DPT, OPV, Hepatitis B, HiB, Pneumococcal, IPV
14 Weeks	OPV, DPT, HepatitisB, HiB, Pneumococcal, IPV
6 Months	Rotavirus, Influenza, HPV
9 Months	Measles
12 Months	Varicella
15 Months	MMR, Pneumococcal Booster, IPV
18 Months	OPV, DPT, HiB Booster, Hepatitis A
2 Years	Typhoid, Hepatitis A
4 Years	MMR
5 Years	OPV, DPT Booster

Source: National Immunization Schedule for Infants and Children

10.2.4 Cleanliness and Hygiene

Cleanliness and hygiene play a crucial role in protecting children from infection. Following a routine of good hygiene practices and keeping the environment

clean gives a boost to the overall health and well-being of children. Some everyday habits such as keeping the eyes clean with a wet cloth and gently wiping children's eyelids and the corner of their eyes, are essential. Similarly, the nose, nails and toes should be wiped clean.

10.3 SENSORY STIMULATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Infants use their senses to learn about the world around them. Different senses work together so that infants and toddlers can explore the environment, investigate and behave in a typical manner. Research supports the fact that stimulation helps in brain development by creating neural pathways which further support learning in later years. Sensory stimulation encourages the development of motor skills and the ability to solve simple problems using the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Activities provided for seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting should be numerous and repetitive for proper sensory stimulation in early years. Let us study sensory stimulation in detail.

10.3.1 Visual

Vision and hearing are the first sensory experiences that activate the neural pathways in the brain. Research has come up with evidence to indicate that visual growth develops when children observe colours, shapes and different faces. Caregivers can help develop their vision by interaction or some visual games and activities such as keeping the face close to the baby, making facial gestures, eye contact, playing peek-a-boo etc. In addition, objects and toys of different shapes and colours help children observe differences initiating simple processes of observation and analysis.

10.3.2 Auditory

From birth, children find themselves in the world of sounds and noises through which they absorb the basics of language. Caregivers make baby sounds and talk with them in a babyish voice. Such a modulated, soft tone conveys warmth and playfulness. Slowly, the tone is changed to socialize children to be able to converse in the 'regular' manner. Besides this, children acquire language by exposure to everyday interactions, instructions and sounds. Auditory inputs can be given in many ways such as:

- Talking to children for creating strong language base
- Playing music as children thrive with rhythm and beat
- Giving exposure to natural sounds such as those of birds and animals to widen their sense of sounds and help them connect to the natural habitat

Notes

10.3.3 Touch

When babies are picked up gently and rocked, they get a sense of being wanted and develop a sense of trust. Rough handling of children conveys 'unacceptance' and can cause stress. Holding children in your lap, close to your face and talking softly stimulates sensory inputs and creates a trusting and engaging social milieu. It must be easy for you to guess why children like stuffed toys. The soft cuddly feel of quilted cloth also provides warmth and comfort.

Children identify objects by touch during tactile sensory play, which helps them develop their fine and gross motor skills such as squeezing, pulling, pushing and throwing. Activities for touch will become different as children grow. Children in all contexts are often surrounded by things they can touch. They should be introduced to new textures through food, toys, clothes, sponges, etc. Care should be taken that children are kept away from smoke, harsh chemicals and polluting agents which can enter their bodies through physical contact.

10.3.4 Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic means, sense of movement, i.e. exploring physical space through movement. It is the sense of engaging and learning by movement. Body movement helps children explore the physical space around them. When a caregiver lifts up a child and moves the child in different ways, the awe and wonder within the safety is joyous to babies. As children grow, we see some of them like doing activities by sitting at one place while some want to be outdoors. Similarly, some children grow up to learn better by using their bodies in different ways such as some like clapping, snapping their fingers, clay modeling etc. Movement opportunities go a long way in children's desire for exploring and discovering. Some activities for movement in childcare can be:

- Encourage baby to crawl over, under and through various objects in the home
- Lift baby up and down and play in different positions to help develop her/ his sense of movement and balance
- Hold baby and rock, sway to a rhythm
- Clap and snap as you talk to baby

INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.2

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. Till six months of age, babies get enough nutrition from _____ _____.
2. Warm interactions provide babies with a sense of _____ _____.

Notes

3. Babies need sleep to grow as they are in the stage of _____ _____.
4. Weaning foods are _____preparations given to babies when they transition from mother's _____.

B. Match the following.

i) Tetanus	a) Hygiene
ii) Touch	b) Visual growth
iii) Facial gestures	c) Language and movement
iv) Cleaning eyes	d) Comforting and soothing
v) Infant games	e) Immunization

ACTIVITY 10.1

Cut and paste two pictures of childcare centres taken from newspapers, internet, magazine or neighbourhood. Comment on the activities and materials shown in the pictures with reference to care of children during early years.

10.4 EARLY YEARS AS FOUNDATIONS FOR LATER LEARNING: QUALITY PATHWAYS OF CARE

Children deserve quality care and education from the start! The quality of childcare has a direct impact on children's ability to learn, to build healthy relationships, and to become the best they can be. It has been stated earlier that early childhood is a period of rapid development. It is the foundation for lifelong learning. Indeed, if children get a lazy start, we lose human potential and it will weaken future returns in adult life. A high quality ECCE programme provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

We are sowing the seeds of strong roots and foundations for later life. Infants and toddlers especially need a childcare setting where they can thrive with caregivers who understand how to promote their healthy growth and development. Young children need a schedule that is responsive to their needs, including appropriate stimulation and time to rest. Conditions that generally foster a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for children are:

- Low child/caregiver ratio
- Small group size
- Motivated and sensitive caregivers
- Positive caregiver/child interactions
- Age and developmentally appropriate activities and stimulating materials such as blocks, toys, colours, beads etc.

- Good health, hygiene and safety practices
- Trained staff with regular professional development opportunities

The significance of care for young children is spelt out in the section below.

10.4.1 Interest, Curiosity and Motivation

The early years are a time when what you do can be seen in the children you raise. Often, we do not pay attention to interest among children. Interest is a form of energy that leads to curiosity as well as motivates and guides children's engagement in the world. Infants have an enthusiastic awe and wonder as everything is new and the novelty makes them explore. It is this energy that inculcates interest and curiosity. Interest, if sustained, is vital to emotional health in childhood and it remains vital throughout life. Without interest, there is no curiosity, no exploration and no real learning.

Infants show intense interest in their mother's face or caregiver's face, especially the eyes. Soon, they become interested in objects that are colourful, moving, rhythmic, or harmonious (or, more generally, beautiful). Young children are also wide-eyed in their curiosity and interest which is encouraged with activity and interaction. If caregivers display curiosity for objects, phenomena and provide explanations, children will be curious and motivated. Energy and desire to do, watch and explore will go a long way in sustaining children's lifelong interests. Enthusiastic adult responsiveness to children's interests is the surest way to engage, sustain curiosity and motivation.

10.4.2 Forming Relationships

It is important for babies and young children to have rich and supportive relationships with parents and family members in their early years for them to be alert and active. Positive relationships are important because they help children develop independence, self-esteem and wellbeing. Children will feel confident, secure and be able to trust their relationship with adults in turn learning to trust their own decisions. When interacting with caregiver, children learn social skills, such as sharing, cooperating, and respecting other's ownership. They also learn to communicate and develop motor skills. Cognitive stimulation influencing early brain development is strongly dependent on early attachment and positive relationships. These relationships built in the early years go a long way in maintaining interest, curiosity and motivation throughout life. In later years, children's social skills, emotional state, and sense of value affect their academic learning.

10.4.3 Play and Playful Interactions

From birth, children explore their senses and process new information in a manner

that appears playful. Initially, they use their body as they throw their arms and legs to make demands. They begin to make sense of the world around them as they grow through the exploration of new textures, materials and resources. Sensory play encourages discovery and independent thinking, as well as inspiring imagination and creativity. Research shows that sensory play can benefit children's development and learning.

- Brain development emerges from engaging in sensory play that influences learning, memory and ability to complete more complex learning tasks.
- Language development is also rooted in play, helping children learn new ways of talking about the world. New experiences, objects, listening to songs and jingles encourages language development and skill to communicate effectively with others whilst playing.
- Fine and gross motor skills are enhanced as children identify objects by touch during tactile sensory play, which helps them develop their fine and gross motor skills such as squeezing, pulling, pushing and throwing.
- Cognitive growth is supported by sensory play enhancing their thought process, understanding and reasoning. Manipulating new materials allows understanding of new concepts.
- Social interaction is fostered by group activities. A positive sensory play environment encourages children to interact and work with others effectively, which is essential for their development. They begin to share their ideas and build new relationships. Sand or water play or painting together are popular ways of encouraging social interaction as children sit around and mess with materials.
- Active sensory play helps children become more self-aware and body-aware, which helps them develop a better sense of space around them.

10.4.5 Rhythms and Caregiving

Routines are important because they give children a sense of security and control over their environment. Routines allow children to be emotionally prepared for changes that are to come. They protect children from unexpected changes as familiar schedules or routines or familiar objects bring in a sense of continuity and permanence and soothe children in times of change. Babies do not understand morning or evening but it is through caregiving practices that they learn about time, sequencing and permanence. Elders in the family often make comments that sound astounding and unbelievable such as, "This baby cries in the evening if the father is late from work" or tell the mother, "Better come by 4 pm. After that, your child gets restless." Such comments are from mere observations and leave you wondering about the capacity of baby, barely four months or six months old, to function in real time. It is the biological clock and rhythms that cause children distress if there is too much change in their routines. Familiar objects and careful following of care routines help children develop stable emotions and

balance. From the time babies are born, they like a predictable world and everyday rhythms and cycles of caregiving provide the comfort of expectation and gratification. For young children, every day is packed with learning and excitement, and routines provide relief from the chaos.

INTEXT QUESTION 10.3

Fill in the blanks.

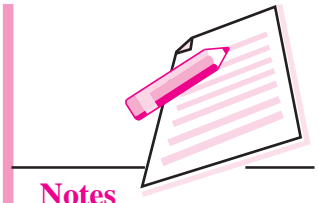
1. Cognitive stimulation is dependent on early ……..and …….relationships.
2. Routines give children a sense of …..and control over their…….
3. Sensory play encourages ……., ……..,…….and……..
4. Interest and .....are important for exploration and learning.
5. Young children need a schedule that is responsive to their needs, including appropriate …….and time to ……..

10.5 TYPES OF CARE SETTINGS: FAMILIAL AND NON–FAMILIAL

Care of babies and infants largely takes place in the home. However, there can be many factors such as working parents, single parents or children in institutions that prompt a need for some children to grow up out of family care by non-familial adults. It becomes imperative to train these adults for the care of babies especially in the significance of reaching each child. Childcare can be divided into 'centre-based care' and 'home-based care'. Childcare homes generally care for a smaller number of children in the provider's home, while centres serve a larger group in a non-home setting. There is distinction in care by relatives such as aunts, uncles, cousins and non-relatives. The category of non-relative caregiver includes babysitters who are in the home, neighbours, friends etc. providing care in either the child's or the provider's home. The category of organized childcare includes crèches, day care centres, preschools, childcare centres, nursery schools, kindergarten and pre-primary schools. Sometimes, employers also provide day care for childcare at or near works sites to children of their employees.

10.6 CAREGIVERS (PARENTS AND TEACHERS) AND CHILDREN

Parents, teachers and children is a dynamic triad, and this threesome have to be in close communication. Parents and teachers need to work as a team keeping the interests of children in focus. Both parents and teachers have the role of creating a nurturing environment ensuring that children are healthy and safe.



Notes

They are required to equip children with the skills and resources to succeed as adults, and to transmit basic cultural values. Their role is also to provide opportunities to master key developmental tasks supporting physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. During the early years, children need:

- unconditional love from family
- safe and secure surroundings
- supportive teachers and caretakers
- opportunity to play with other children
- self-confidence and high self-esteem
- appropriate guidance and discipline

All these are possible with the constant collaboration between parents and teachers. These are discussed below.

10.6.1 Collaboration Between Parents and Teachers

Care centres may have to take a lead in keeping a consistent contact with parents as they would deal with groups of children. Meetings with parents in the form of a workshop or group are useful as parents learn from each other about childcare practices, behaviour issues and ways of disciplining children. Regular exchanges almost at a daily level have to be maintained between parents and caregivers due to children's rapid rate of development. The milestones need to be tracked as well as enjoyed by both parents and teachers to keep abreast of changes and developmental delays, if any. You have already read in the earlier lessons about the need for early identification of developmental delays.

10.6.2 Channels of Parent Teacher Communication

Parents can be in touch with centres by appointment in case of some special issues, or otherwise through children's activities and responses that may be shared at the time of drop off and pick up. Regular conversations in the mornings and evening allow the home and centre to be extensions of each other ensuring that children do not feel unfamiliar. Sharing of children's home routines and certain reactions will allow the teacher to make references and such dialogues add to the emotional security of children. Similarly, when children get to hear things about school from their parents, they feel valued and reassured that school is a part of the family routine and not a space where they are just sent off. Parents and teachers can also connect with each other through means of technology such as email, social networking, text messages and phone calls. You can explore more about communication in Module 4.

Notes

10.6.3 Children and their Perceptions of Caregiving Practices

Children do not have a wide repertoire of expressive vocabulary, yet they convey their discomforts and unpleasant experiences by either being irritable or crying without apparent reason. In fact, both teachers and parents can help relieve stress among children by sensitive responses to children's display of unusual actions. Let us understand by the following example:

"A child was chronologically 18 months but had the appearance and competencies of about eight months only. The child would shudder and shake at the slightest sound or noise and make no attempt to reach for any adult. The caregiver noticed that when she tried to feed the boy milk, he resisted. On coaxing, he responded. By the end of the day, the child snuggled in the caregiver's lap and in the days to follow, got attached to her. He started sitting with more confidence and soon with consistent guidance began to stand with support and within four months, the child was thriving and was quick to catch up with age-appropriate behaviours."

This example illustrates the three principles of care of children under three. This also explains that early intervention and early detection can help children thrive. The child was lagging behind from conception to the time he came to the centre. He was developing stress as there was no communication to address his distress and anxiety. Sensitive staff can do wonders to the wellbeing of children.

In other social contexts also, children can gain by interventions of sensitive and responsive adults in home or school settings. Parents and teachers need to function as a team and not in opposition to each other. Children come home and are eager to talk. That is the time that parents should listen, try and understand the nature of their experiences. If two or three- year old children say, "I did nothing at school," or "I did not get my turn," or "Teacher does not smile. I want teacher to smile at all children," they are actually providing a review of the care centre, the environment as well as the caregiver's disposition. Children are active, alert and make meanings in their own ways. Adults need to acknowledge and appreciate these meanings made by children.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Incredible growth takes place in all domains of development during early years. Nurturing home environment is essential for bringing positive developmental outcomes.
- A supportive and responsive environment, responsive relationships and strong life skills and reduce sources of stress are the key principles of caregiving.
- There are some basic ways to ensure growth, survival and development of children.

Notes

- Children need to be provided sensory stimulation for supporting their development.
- The quality of childcare impacts children's ability to learn, to build healthy relationships and develop holistically.
- A high quality ECCE programme provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children.
- Play and playful interactions are essential during early childhood development.
- Rhythms and cycles of caregiving provide the comfort of expectation and gratification to young children.
- There are familial and non- familial childcare settings.
- Parents, teachers and children have to be in close communication with each other.
- Parents and teachers need to work as a team keeping the interests of children in focus. They are required to create a nurturing environment for children.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Explain the significance of sensory stimulation.
2. Discuss the principles of caregiving of children under three years.
3. Describe the importance of health, hygiene and feeding practices in the first three years.
4. Discuss briefly the different kinds of caregiving systems.
5. How do parents and teachers contribute to the overall development of children?
6. Why is rhythm important in caregiving?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

10.1

1. False 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True

Notes

10.2

A. 1. breast milk 2. trust 3. rapid development 4. semi-solid, milk

B. i - e ii- d iii-b iv- a v - c

10.3

1. attachment, positive 2. security, environment 3. discovery, independent thinking imagination, creativity 4. constructive, motivation 5. stimulation, rest

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11

PLAY AND EARLY LEARNING

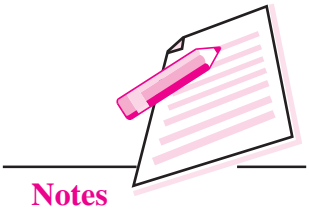
Have you ever closely observed play activities of small children? What are the peculiarities you have noticed? Do you know the importance of these simple play activities in the entire life of a human being? In previous lessons, you learnt about the significance of early childhood education leading to sound and holistic development of children. Children like to explore, discover and play and if they get the best environment, it will ensure proper cognitive, socio-emotional and physical development.

During early childhood, every activity of children is attractive. The onlooker is surprised even when the baby experiences joy in just moving arms and legs and repeating with gurgling sounds. These are the beginnings of play and are most valuable for the lives of children everywhere. Communities create infant toys such as rattles, mobiles or hang bells within the child's movement sphere to enhance interest and creating connections with the physical environment. Self-propelling acts become infant play and are essential for the overall development of the child.

As the child grows, the nature of play evolves and includes response to people, objects and willful acts of experimenting and exploring. The child may pull something, throw an object or push a block like a train. It is in such acts that children display their thoughts and imagination. Through play, the child experiences different emotions and learns about the world around.

Play is universal and all of us agree that play in early childhood is children's path to uncovering, discovering and learning about the secrets of the physical social world. During childhood, new skills are developed or learned through different play activities.

In this lesson, you will learn the importance of play in the early childhood years in the early learning of children and how it will boost their further development.



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LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- discuss what is play;
- explain the importance of play;
- distinguish between the different types of play;
- explain how play develops;
- identify suitable equipment and material for indoor and outdoor play; and
- identify developmentally appropriate play based activities across domains.

11.1 DEFINING PLAY

Children's play can be defined in many ways but we can say that it is a creative process in which a child uses the mind and body free from externally imposed goals. It is often said that play is a child's chosen act or engagement with objects, peers or just with themselves. Play provides opportunity to explore, experiment and experience in non-threatening ways. Play, as described by Piaget, consists of responses repeated purely for functional pleasure. As children grow, play has rules and regulations, which are imposed by the players for their own convenience. On the other hand, Froebel considered play as highly serious and of deep significance, not something trivial.

Following are some definitions of play:

Joyful, spontaneous, and creative activity in which man finds his fullest expression.	***Ross***
Instinctive practice, without serious intent of activities that will later be essential to life.	***Gross***
A free, self contained activity that has an inherent goal, that is initiated, and directed by intrinsic motivation, and that provides satisfaction from the activity of playing itself.	***Stern***
Resembles the unending activity of the flowing stream or the growing tree. Play is the work of the child.	***Montessori***
Any activity that is directed towards an end other than enjoyment cannot be rightly called play.	***Hurlock***

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11.2 IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Play is natural for children as it facilitates their growth and development. While playing, children exercise their limbs, they learn new words and most important play becomes joyous when there are other children. The presence of other children enhances the social value of play. During play, childen get the opportunity to interact with peers, which strengthens social relations.Children learn how to work, how to obey others and how to be disciplined. Emotional development is the result of play.

When children play together, they exchange ideas, discuss, argue, share their thoughts and feelings. All these are essential for their language development. It increases their power of reasoning, imagination and thinking. They also learn good habits and values from each other. Children learn about characteristics and properties of objects, people and animals through play that is helpful for their social, emotional and cognitive development. Play is the natural method of teaching children. It is a medium through which they get immediate consequences of their activities.

Play is a universal phenomena on. It benefits children in their all-round development and growth. The most important values of play are:

(i) Physical value

Play has a vital role in the physical development of children. During play different parts of the body are activated. It also serves as an outlet for surplus energy. If the energy is not spent properly, children can become irritable and nervous. More than that, it helps proper coordination of muscles, purposeful movement of arms and legs which determine the general appearance of the body.

(ii) Social value

Play helps children develop friendly relationships and learn cooperation. Children get maximum social contact during play and thus learn social manners, behaviour and ways to solve problems with friends.

(iii) Cognitive value

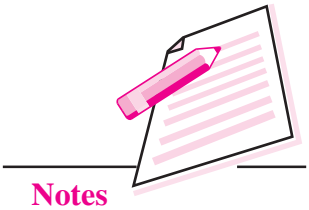
Play provides children the opportunity to observe, concentrate and experiment, develop problem solving skills, vocabulary, expression, imagination and creativity.

(iv) Moral value

Children learn what is right and what is wrong, how to respect elders and how to behave with peers from the same age group, friends and playmates.

(v) Therapeutic value

Play helps children give way to pent up emotions. Shy children learn to enjoy themselves with others, while aggressive ones can learn to wait patiently for their turn. Over-competitive children can learn to accept losses, while those



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with a sense of insecurity can gain self-respect and respect for others through play.

(vi) Recreational value

Play activities bring enjoyment and relaxation. It keeps children emotionally satisfied and prevents boredom.

(vii) Educational value

Children learn a lot during play. Through the use of toys they learn about colours, sizes, shapes and textures.

You must have noted that the significance of play is manifold as children gather vast information and knowledge by their own efforts. The experiences build children's relation with their surroundings besides inculcating desire and motivation for learning and knowing about what is around.

Modern research affective neuroscience has uncovered important links between playing and neurogenesis in the brain. It stresses that children learn best through an integrated approach combining physical, emotional, cognitive, and social aspects. Scientists like Sergio Pellis conclude that the experiences we receive from play change the connections of neurons at the front end of our brain.

11.3 TYPES OF PLAY

There are different opinions by different psychologists about the different nature of play and how it helps children to develop skills and interest in learning.

Piaget (1945-1962) explains the levels of play as:

- *Practice Play*: It matches with the sensorimotor stage (0-2 years). Physical senses play a major role during play. Play at the stage may consist of repeated body movements, putting object in the mouth, blowing spit bubbles.
- *Symbolic Play*: It starts when the child is able to use the objects as a symbol of something (2-7 years). A representational system develops during the period. Children will engage in make believe games and fantasy role play.
- *Games with Rules*: This level starts when a child is ready to accept the complexity and rules imposed during the game (7-11 years). Play becomes more structured. Rules are developed and play now takes on a social aspect.

Smilansky (1968) divided play skills into four stages:

- *Functional Play:* It is the first stage in which children play with objects. Physical movements and motor skills are also included in this stage.
- *Constructive Play*: At this stage, children use objects to construct something. It involves sensorimotor activities where children use their creativity. Children begin to understand their surroundings and begin to initiate what they see.

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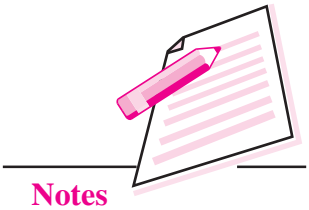
Fig. 11.1 Children involved in Constructive Play

- *Dramatic Play:* Children start using imagination to make something from some objects.
- *Games with Rules*: Children participate in competition type games. It allows children to understand the idea of rules, accept rules and play by the rules.

Parten (1929), had also studied play from its value for inculcating social skills. Parten stated that children's play changed as they developed, going through six distinct stages that generally, but not always, corresponded to children's ages:

- *Unoccupied play :* Children do not seem to be engaged or actively playing with others at all. This is play among newborns and infants and may be seen in children in new spaces, between the ages of 0 and 2 years and is important for later exploration and development.
- *Solitary play :* Children often play alone, with toys different from those of others, and are uninterested or unaware of others. This stage of play is most commonly seen in young toddlers. However, it benefits children of all ages. Solitary play teaches children to be by themselves in a productive manner.
- *Onlooker play :* Onlooker play is when a child observes others playing but does not join the play. They may engage in social interactions to learn more about the game or play that is going on. This is common in children between the ages of two-and-a-half and three-and-a-half years, but can take place at any age.
- *Parallel play :* This also occurs between ages of two-and-a-half and three-and-a-half years when children play side-by-side, not engaging with each other. They may play with similar toys and mimic one another. It seems there is very little contact between them, however they actually learn quite a lot from one another.



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- *Associative play :* By the age of three or four years, children begin to play together, but do not focus on a common goal. Children will be more interested in playing with other children around rather than with individual toys. Children may exchange toys or actively talk with or engage one another, but no rules of play are being set. They learn that cooperation and problem solving are essential.
- *Cooperative play :* Cooperative play is where play finally becomes organized into groups and teamwork is seen. Children are now interested in who they play with and what the activity is. They now can accept a leader, as well as other assigned roles, and play to accomplish group goals or specific tasks. Through this, children learn organizational skills as well as social maturity.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.1

I) Match Column A with Column B.

Column A	*Column B*
(a) Practice play	(i) Representational system develops
(b) Dramatic play	(ii) First stage of Smilansky's play
(c) Symbolic play	(iii) Children use imagination
(d) Functional play	(iv) Major role of senses during play

II) State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) A six month old infant is in the pram in a park and watches children going up and down the slide. He is enjoying onlooker play.

b) Two year old children creating towers with building blocks. It is an example of constructive play.

11.4 HOW PLAY DEVELOPS

As described by different scholars play varies with age. Piaget described play sequence at different ages. Other the or is its have also discussed play sequences at different levels. Play changes according to the biological, social, emotional and intellectual competencies. An infant's capacities allow for play through use of the body. Biological maturity allows mobility and manipulation, which lead to exploration, and self-initiated acts providing social adaptability, building of abilities and learning about capacities. Eventually, children acquire emotional maturity and increasing intellectual perception.

We often see children take a stick and jump and chant "Tug-bug-tug-bug", pretending to be a horse Such activities convey recall of an earlier experience, joy in performing, imagining themselves on horse and ability to adapt and recreate.

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There are certain patterns and sequence in play behaviour that children display as they grow.

Play in First Two Years

Sensorimotor play, play with objects, symbolic and social play with adults are the main types of infant play. Play at this age is rooted in the movement of the body and discovering the possibilities with movement of hands and feet.

Sensorimotor play occurs when there is repetition of sensory or motor activity. Chilren do so for their happiness. As they approach one year of age, their interest moves to the surroundings as they can move on their own and become familiar with others.

Play with an object starts at four to five months because, by this time, children has acquired eye-hand coordination and can grasp things around .

Symbolic play starts after the first year. The process of substituting one object for the other is very common. For example, using a wooden piece as a telephone receiver.

In the second year, object play reaches maturity. Differentiating objects according to their size and shape is a noticeable change during these year. Social play with adults starts after the age of one and a half year. Playing with peer groups and other family members continues for the next few years.

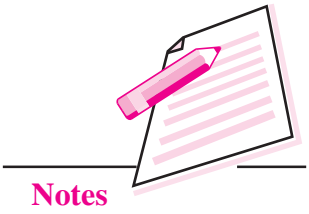
Ages 2 to 5

During this period, all play becomes more purposeful. The size of the group for social play increases and the play becomes challenging with cooperation and compromise. Play and play mates become more selective, and selection is done according to their interest on the basis of age and gender.

Parallel play and solitary play are two special varieties of play observed in children after two years of age. Solitary play means playing alone and parallel play means independent play in the same play and in the same group. Amount of time spent for make-believe play (symbolic) increases at this period. Dramatic play is the feature of this age group. In dramatic play, children play the role of a shopkeeper or a family member.

Ages 5 to 12

At this age, children enter elementary school. The play pattern becomes more systematic and regulated. The strength of make believe play reduces gradually and play becomes logical and rule dominated. They start to play competitive and serious games with rules like basketball and football . The number of participants (at least two) and their behaviour are controlled by some strict rules and group norms.



Thus, play and the purpose of play are different from age to age. As per the development of different skills, the nature of play may change.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.2

Fill in the blanks:

(a) Play with objects starts at ..... age because children acquire eye-hand coordination for grasping objects.

(b) The process of substituting one object for the other happens during the ....

(c) Play and purpose of play is different from…….to …….

(d) 5-12 year old children understand rules and thus prefer games like ..... and ....

11.5 SETTING UP AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE FOR PLAY AND EARLY LEARNING

Till now, we have been discussing the importance of play in children's learning. Play also implies opportunities, materials and objects for children to engage, participate and express. Environments be attractive and accessible, which will compel children to engage and lead to play and learning. Absence of sensory material and just empty spaces will not be rich in promoting play. Absence of appeal and engagement will be obstacles and suppress children's natural curiosity and orientation for healthy learning aptitude.

If we understand children's patterns of play we can provide an environment rich in play. Arrangement of play materials and other equipment directly or indirectly influences children's activity and play behaviour. Open and spacious places allow children free movement, whereas crowded and congested spaces create restrictions for children's movements.

It is important to organize play materials wisely such that children have easy access to see materials and be able to make choices. Such processes facilitate among children constructive and creative play. Presence of adults to interact or sometimes show a trick helps to channelise the behaviour of children in a more acceptable way. Mere display of play equipment on shelves may lead to frustration and other undesirable or destructive behavior among children. A well organised placement of things would avoid undesirable behavior and make children happy, creative, constructive, imaginative and explorative.

How to design: Children are curious, exploratory and imaginative. They like to touch, taste, smell, hear and see things for themselves. They are full of energy and have a short attention span. So, they must be kept busy with interesting activities such as playing games, listening to stories, drawing, painting, running, jumping,

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singing and exploring things in their own environment. Organising such activities will help in promoting all round development in children.

There are different ways and methods to decide the best arrangements of toys and equipment. Since the main purpose of play is the physical, mental, emotional, and social development children, placement of indoor and outdoor facilities should be appropriate to meet this purpose. Therefore, proper planning is needed for this. The points that one should keep in mind are:

(i) Ease of supervision and guidance

(ii) Attention to safety

(iii) Maximum provision of space for free movement

(iv) Cater to spheres of interest

(v) Satisfy the needs of the group

(vi) Satisfy the needs of the child

(vii) Activities which are special should be arranged in a readily available place

(viii) Similar activities may be kept at one place

(ix) Shelves and furniture which are used for playing should be of appropriate size and height *(Gupta, Sen-.2013).*

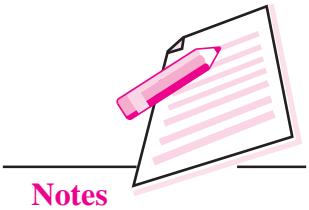
How the environment is structured, creates an active learning climate to stimulate cognitive skills, opportunity for healthy and strong play experiences. Play serves to facilitate language development, reading and writing readiness, emotional maturity and social skills. The learning environment should be pleasurable, motivating, rewarding and free from frustrations and danger.

Opportunities for sharing promotes social growth while self-expression and communication enhance emotional skills.

The physical setting of the play equipment can be organized mainly in two ways: Inside the classrooms and outside the classrooms. This is known as indoor and outdoor arrangements.

11.5.1: Indoor Arrangements: There are a number of indoor equipment that could be kept in a playroom. All the materials should be arranged so that children can reach them on their own, and according to their use by both individual and groups of children. Enough space is also an essential factor of placing these. Some of them are mentioned here.

(i) Dolls Corner/Dramatic Area: A corner where home related objects, a basket of old bags, sandals, scarves and other familiar objects will allow children to engage in role plays by themselves or in a group of five to six children. They will play out different roles at one time. They will also be handling



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different home related equipment and their use will help in knowing their perceptions and their observations. Therefore, according to the nature of the task, a corner of the play room will be the best location for it. Sufficient material as per their needs, will promise more social interactions where they will earn to share, meet the desires of other children and express individual feelings.

(ii) **Blocks or Construction Area:** As we know, blocks are used as construction toys for building things. There should be blocks of different sizes and weights. If more than one child is playing with the blocks, there are chances of intentional interference of others which will cause destruction of the structure created. Block play is a valuable learning tool. An area should be set aside for block play as such play develops imagination, creativity and social skills. Larger or heavy blocks should be arranged in lower shelves to avoid them from falling on the toes of children.

This type of play enhances gross and fine motor development. If space permits different types of toys, bikes, small cars, trucks, boats, jeeps, animals may also be placed with blocks. Combinations of this material will be productive, imaginative and creative.

(iii) **Library, books and puzzle area:** Books are important in the playroom. The room will have to be lit properly to facilitate reading. Two or more children may read or discuss a book. A corner or some suitable space will be suitable for this purpose. A low, height- appropriate chair and table may be suitable for supporting books. A variety of books for different ages will encourage the children and create more interest in reading. There can also be a collection of simple puzzles.

(iv) **Art Area:** One part of the room must be devoted for keeping materials for drawing, painting and other art activities. The space for it may be allocated near the wash basin or lavatory so that the children can get water for drawing or painting and wash their hands without disturbing others. If art materials are easily accessible for young children, it will not only save time of the adults but also help children to become independent.

A part from all these materials, manipulative toys for muscular coordination, science experimental instruments, a space for plants and musical instruments can also be arranged in the playroom to create a discovery corner and a music and movement corner. A playroom (indoor) should be arranged in such a way that children can move freely and materials should be easily accessible for all children irrespective of their age, gender and height.

11.5.2: Some play materials and toys: Design of space is enriched by the different kinds of materials that can be available for children. Children enjoy playing with old bottle caps, crushing newspaper, leaves, pebbles and a variety

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of objects. It is indeed a challenge to provide range of materials to meet the varying needs of children. Toys have been classified as:

1. Toys for physical movement and muscular development
2. Toys for constructive and creative play
3. Toys for dramatic action, imaginative and fantasy play

Toys and materials can have an age graded arrangement. The following chart will provide you an idea of the possible categorization:

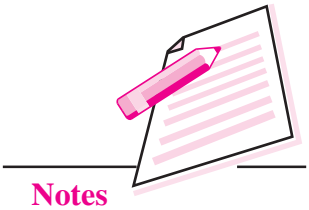
Birth to 2 years	*2 years to 4 years*	*4 years to 6 years*
- Climbing frames, swings - Sliding objects - Large balls - Run about and pull-along toys - Animals on wheels, wagons and trucks - Boxes with or without wheels - Carts, barrows, push- pull toys, rocking objects	Old tyres Jumping pits Kitchen kits Blocks Picture books puzzles Drawing and painting Play material for reading and writing	Balance beams Water play Sweeping objects Materials for group games (cricket, catch) Swings like slides, merry-go round

Adapted from *(Maisnam, Premlata, & Bhargava, Amita. 2013)*.

11.5.3: Outdoor Arrangements: Outdoor play are a also needs to be divided for particular play activities. For example, there has to be concrete pathways for riding a tricycle; sand-pit area along with the play equipment; water-play area; jungle-gym area; slide and swing area and spacious green area for running. Outdoor area should be spacious and not limited. Certain play activities can be performed both indoors and outdoors.

The outdoor play equipment should be arranged to give more opportunities for large muscle activities like running, climbing, jumping, sliding, crawling, digging and swinging. In outdoor play area, some equipment like a jumping pit, swings and slides may be fixed permanently. These should be in adequate proportion and accessible to small children. Supervision is very essential for outdoor play activities. The position of certain equipment can be rearranged according to the seasonal changes like winter and summer as per the needs and convenience of the players.

11.5.4: Group and individual play: We have seen that children in the school yard or neighbourhood often play in groups. The group experience extends the values



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of family life, democratic living and value of cooperation. Formation of playgroups in early childhood years is very significant. Usually, children want to form groups of the same age and gender. This type of group fosters leadership quality, sense of loyalty and social learning.

Play groups are formed on the basis of children's shared interests, backgrounds or activities. In preschool, children form groups simply as playmates. Duration of these groups change from time to time. Group members should give positive feedback and engage in low levels of conflict.

Groups can be formed in different sizes: Large group, medium group and small group.

Large group: Large group is formed for teaching, storytelling, music, dance and similar activities. The whole class is considered as a large group with children of a wide range of abilities. For example, circle-time activities are very suitable for a large group.

Medium group: Since the children are different from each other, their needs are also different. A larger group can be divided into two or three groups containing 10-12 children. The teacher can help the group which needs more guidance and supervision. The other groups could be made engaged for free play or some other outdoor activities that need less guidance and supervision.

If the classroom space is less, children may be divided into two or three groups and the activities may be done in rotation. For example, one group can play on outdoor equipment and theme based outdoor activity can be done with another group. Similarly, collage activity can be given in two or three groups.

Small group:-Small groups are formed when individual attention and guidance are needed,. This group contains less than six children. Children work in pairs or small groups of three to five children work together to complete a specific task. There should be separate areas to play for different groups and children from one group should not interfere in the activities of the other group. If needed, one can switch to another group.

Children undergo many developmental changes at every stage of their life. Play activities will also change according to that. As age increases, aimless play will become purposeful. Teachers and parents working with children should know about these changes and act accordingly. Each child develops physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually and these developments will be different for different children. Food, exercise, types of play and the environment are factors which affect the development of children. Therefore, it is the responsibility of teachers

Notes

and administrators to give age appropriate exercises and play experiences to children.

INTEXT QUESTONS 11.3

State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Arrangement of play materials and other equipment does not have any influence on children's activities.

(b) Supervision is very essential for outdoor play activities.

(c) Play activities that involve swinging, walking, running, jumping, sliding, etc. help in large muscle coordination.

(d) Teachers and parents should know development changes during a child's life.

11.6 PLAY-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR ALL DOMAINS

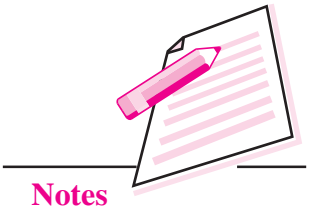
Since children learn, grow and develop through play, the activities which are organised for children should be based on play encompassing all domains of development. There are three divisions in the development domain. They are:

1. Cognitive and language domain
2. Affective (socio-emotional) domain
3. Psychomotor domain

Activities for cognitive domain: Children gather information about basic concepts like time, number, space, position, shape and sound. Activities for cognitive development comprise activities for proper use of senses, concept formation (concept of colour, shape, size, number, space, volume, length, weight, speed and time) and basic cognitive skills.

Games for listening, discriminating sounds, discriminating different surfaces (smooth and rough), distinguishing between good and bad smell, identifying different colours, dance and music, etc.can be arranged for stimulating the use of senses effectively and also for concept formation.

For basic cognitive skills, it is better to do activities like puzzles, story completion, picture completion, science experiments, memory games, stories, logical sequencing (thinking, reasoning and problem solving), making patterns, recalling of sequential activities, etc.



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Language development can be fostered through reading and writing readiness activities, e.g., oral expression, listening skills and vocabulary as these are components of language. Reading and writing can be cultivated through use of pictures, picture books, magazines, newspapers, paper, pencils, slates, sand, crayons, paints and brushes.

Free conversation e.g., conversation using pictures and objects, telling stories, role play, creative drama, puppet play, doll play, etc are used for oral expression. Listening games, auditory discrimination, following directions by listening and stories are the best way to develop listening skills.

In brief, concepts must be taught to children in a specific sequence. Some activities suggested are the following:

1. Arranging objects according to size (big, small, long, short) and quantity (more, less)
2. Matching pictures
3. Observing plants, animals, clouds, rain, people working, day, night, etc.
4. Touching, feeling, tasting and smelling things

Activities for affective domain: Children develop interest, attitudes, appreciate beauty and internalize values. Some activities suggested are :

1. Dramatising stories
2. Singing songs
3. Reciting poems in rhythm
4. Dressing up dolls imaginatively
5. Speaking about something

Children imbibe social and emotional skills when they play in groups. They learn how to share, take turns and understand that each person has a special identity. While engaging in play, they also learn to recognize their limitations as they may 'have to wait their turn'. Such moments provide understanding emotions and regulation of feelings. It is important to know that many social and emotional capacities are acquired while engaging in group or individual activities.

Children also enjoy and learn social values in group celebrations and organized festivities. Group plays and games, cleaning the work place, celebrating birthdays of each child, being rewarded for good work are the suggested experiences for social and emotional development of children.

Activities for psycho motor domain: Children develop different skills through the activities given to them. Therefore, the tasks should be planned in such a way that these will in culcate accuracy, precision, concentration and develop fine and gross motor skills in children.

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Objects fostering pushing-pulling, throwing, catching, pedaling, crawling, jumping, stretching, walking, rocking, swinging, sliding, rolling, hopping and kicking are activities undertaken for the development of physical and large muscle coordination.

Also, some activities advised for fine motor development are stringing of wooden beads with large holes and different colours, free hand moving exercises, thread printing, leaf or vegetable printing, working with paper (tearing, cutting, collage making), making different shapes using clay and constructive play with sand and mud. In addition, free painting, drawing, cutting, pasting, folding and clay modeling also facilitate psychomotor development

All these activities should be planned on a regular basis and children must do all these in a playful way and in a happy environment.

11.6.1 Planning Play Activities Across themes

There are a variety of themes related to the environment of children like trees, animals, birds, flowers and insects. Various activities are planned and developed across themes.

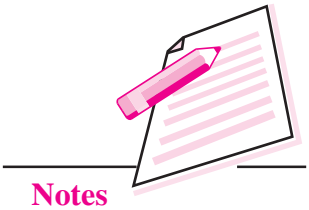
Small children always like to play. We cannot impose any knowledge through any subject. Therefore, theme based play activities are the best way for this purpose. The theme must be planned according to the age and interest of children. The topic for the theme should have a close relation to the environment of the children. It will give an opportunity to promote their innate capacity to broaden ideas about which they are very familiar. They express their opinion from their first-hand or concrete experiences and experiences from sensory perception. It presents the possibility of an extremely useful and enjoy able preschool programmes essentially for meeting their developmental needs. The activities related to themes can be organized for a week or two such as:

a) Child and her/his environment: Vegetables, animals, fruits, pollution, vehicles, sky, sun, moon, festivals etc.

b) Child and people around her/his: Family members, neighbours, friends, school, community helpers, etc.

Topics/themes which provide concrete experiences to children could be :

1. Myself
2. Mother
3. Father
4. Food
5. Water



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6. Clothes
7. Good habits
8. People who help me
9. Seasons

INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.4

Fill in the blanks:

(a) The theme must be planned according to the ..... and ..... of the children.

(b) Arranging objects according to the size is an activity of ..... domain.

(c) ..... is an example of an affective domain activity.

(d) Activities promoting fine and gross motor skills belong to the..... domain.

11.7 ROLE OF TEACHERS AS FACILITATORS IN CHILDREN'S PLAY

In order to make play meaningful and purposive, the teacher should also be a part of the activities. Proper direction from teachers affects the quantity and quality of play.

Teacher as an observer: The teacher observes the activities of the children in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. S/he observes how children interact with each other, how they handle objects, whether they have any problem with their group, etc. The length of time children spend with play materials also is observed by the teacher. Clear and purposeful watching helps in planning innovative plays activities and improve the existing play situations.

Teacher as a facilitator: Mere play is not enough for children to develop. It is the role of the teacher to direct the play activities for learning. S/he has to create a climate and arrange the equipment according to their need and purpose. Here, the teacher acts as a facilitator and arranges toys to refine visual discrimination. Teachers should allow children to speak freely. S/he should encourage children to ask questions to invoke curiosity.

Teacher as a reviewer: After every activity the teacher has to determine how the particular type of play met the needs of each individual child. The teacher has to make sure that the purpose of play i.e., for cognitive, social, physical growth etc. has taken place during the play. Teachers should be able to communicate with parents, administrators, etc. about the changes and improvements. The play

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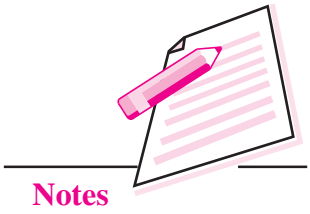
environment, facilities and activities must be assessed on the basis of curriculum goals.

Teacher as an organiser: As a teacher, the first and the most important duty is to organise and prepare a playful environment for children. The teacher should provide the materials and equipment for meaningful play activities. The class room and the outdoor area should be arranged in a safe, happy and healthy atmosphere. There is no doubt that the atmosphere should be interesting, challenging and motivating.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt that:

- Play is very important for learning skills during the early childhood period.
- Play has a very prominent role in the overall development of children. Hence, children should be allowed to engage in different play activities with developmentally appropriate play materials.
- Different philosophers and psychologists have proved the importance of play through their studies and experiments.
- Teachers, parents and administrators should try to provide age appropriate indoor and outdoor facilities at home and school.
- School readiness of children can be fostered only through play. It is the duty of the teachers to give proper guidance at proper places.
- Activities and play materials should be designed and arranged according to the developmental needs of children.
- Teachers play an imperative role in making play meaningful and purposeful. Teachers proper direction affects the quantity and quality of play.
- Thematic approach in devising play activities according to the age and interest of children provides first -hand concrete experiences.
- Since children learn, grow and develop through play, activities should be based on play to cover all domains of development namely, cognitive, affective and psychomotor.



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TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Explain in detail the meaning and nature of play.
2. Describe the types of play in early years. Explain with examples.
3. How does play develop?
4. Design some activities for:
   a) Gross motor development
   b) Language development
   c) Social development
   d) Development of creativity and self - expression
5. What is meant by thematic approach in planning play activities?
6. Describe the qualities of a good preschool teacher in terms of organising meaningful and purposeful play activities.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

11.1

I) (a) iv
   (b) iii
   (c) i
   (d) ii

II) (a) True
   (b) True

11.2

(a) 4 to 5 months

(b) first year

Notes

(c) age, age

(d) football, basketball (any game with rules)

11.3

(a) False

(b) True

(c) True

(d) True

11.4

(a) age, interest

(b) cognitive

(c) dramatising stories, poem recitation, doll dressing, etc.

(d) psychomotor

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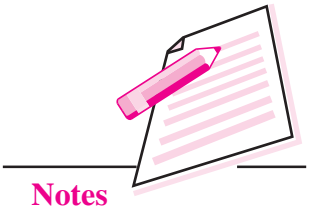

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12

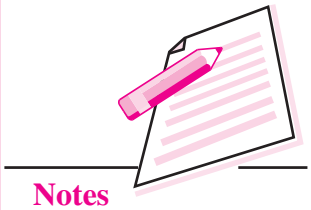
PLANNING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ECCE CURRICULUM

From birth, babies attempt to build a relation with their surroundings using all their senses. Babies are wide-eyed, get startled by loud noise, pull back their feet when stroked and slowly make gurgling sounds to a game of peek-a-boo. Psychologists and educationists agree that early childhood (birth to eight years of age) is a crucial stage of life in terms of physical and motor, cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children. At this stage, growth of abilities also takes place at an astounding rate, which leads to a high proportion of early learning. It is a time when children need a stimulating and an enabling environment, and quality learning experiences. In the absence of a responsive environment children may lose chances of development. Advantages of a healthy start could be irreversibly reduced. The significance of the first 1000 days is being increasingly recognized as crucial for lifelong learning. Continuing during the preschool level, it is important to ensure that necessary maturational and experimental experiences are provided to the children that will help them to learn and grow as per their potential. For children to make optimal gains, we need to plan an age and develop mentally appropriate Early Childhood Education curriculum to ensure the holistic development of children.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and significance of age and developmentally appropriate ECCE curriculum;
- discuss the need and importance of contextualisation of ECCE curriculum;



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- describe the principles of quality in ECCE planning;
- justify the need for long-term and short-term planning;
- design and plan a balanced theme-based ECCE programme for young children;
- discuss the inter-relationship among different areas of development and learning through activities; and
- plan an inclusive programme.

12.1 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF AGE-AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ECCE CURRICULUM OR PROGRAMME

Planning is the backbone for a high quality ECCE programme. Planning for young children means, thinking ahead. The curriculum needs to be flexible and at many times, spontaneous. However, to reach ECCE goals and objectives, children need to be amidst enriched age- and developmentally appropriate experiences and activities that flow in a loosely organized manner. A high quality ECCE programme or curriculum provides a balanced daily schedule through different activities and experiences based on domains i.e. physical-motor, cognitive, language, socio-emotional and art and aesthetic appreciation.

When we talk about age and developmentally appropriate curriculum, we need to keep in mind the age of the children as well as their developmental level. For example, a child may be physically developed but her language is delayed or a child is very alert with quick grasping power but he has difficulty in walking. Therefore, planning according to age, needs, interests and development has to provide for the different needs of children. This would allow young children to flourish in a stress-free, stimulating environment where flexibility in the programme caters to all children.

12.2 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXTUALISATION OF ECCE CURRICULUM

While planning a programme for young children, it must be borne in mind that apart from being age and developmentally appropriate, the programme must relate to the context of children's social and cultural lives. If the language or objects or stories or songs are all unfamiliar, it would be difficult to grab the intrerest children in the classroom dynamics. Local language and simple language appeal to children. Concepts need to relate to real-life concrete experiences and then gradually move to abstract. For example, if you are in a rural area and you are talking about animals, talk about familiar animals first and then gradually show pictures of unfamiliar animals. This is called contextulized learning. Similarly, if you are talking about plants and trees, talk about common and familiar plants from the

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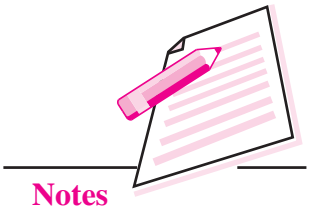
children's environment. Talk and discuss about those vegetables, which the children eat and are familiar with, instead of talking about fruits like strawberries and cherries that children may not have seen. That ensures that teaching and learning become more meaningful and joyful. Lesson that are theme-related, like, food, can have visits to local shops for children to make connections. Celebration of local festivities, national days and regional food days will help children to understand diversity in simple ways. Using multiple methods make ECCE programmes and theme teaching more interesting and contextualized.

In India, diversity can be of two ways; one, where families live in different social, physical and cultural contexts creating a unique milieu, and second when, in one class, there are children from different contexts. Either way, some children find themselves part of a largely majoritarian culture that is not totally their social identity. One uniform curriculum will not work in different spaces. Rural children will respond differently to means of transport or what they see in the environment than urban children will answer. An urban child from a poor family may have only received food from places of worship. Their understanding will vary. A village child may say " The temple is where I meet the priest" while one urban disadvantaged child may reply "The temple is where I get something to eat". One of the major principles in planning is to attend and address children's social realities and not expect responses to curricular content to emerge only in a specific direction. In fact, it is from the variety in children's understanding that we can sow seeds of appreciating differences.

12.2.1 Multicultural Indian Society

India being a multicultural and multilingual nation, we have to guide our thinking in how we deal with children in group settings, especially when dealing with children in the early childhood stage. Children from varied cultural backgrounds enrolled in one preschool would gain by finding a social identity. The context of children's social and cultural contexts can find a place in the curriculum in many ways. Food habits, celebration of festivals, clothes, customs and rituals impact children's approach to the school. For example, a child not knowing the language of the classroom transaction may feel neglected or a child from a rice-eating family may withdraw finding difficulty in eating chapattis or be a little reserved in celebrating unfamiliar festivals. With immense diversity and absence of inclusive practices, the child may find it difficult to adjust and learn and may even opt out of school because of diverse backgrounds. For example, for the theme, Our Environment, each child may name objects from her/his environment with amazing results. Children living near the sea shore may include sea shells, pebbles and fish while those living near a forest may include nest, beehive etc. Allowing children to participate and listening to children permits free expression and involved children.



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Therefore, when we plan a programme for an ECCE centre, we need to ensure social and cultural orientation. Contextualization is an effort to relate the content of the curriculum to the local environment. Generally, to contextualize ideas, statements or events is to contain categories with local and complete meaning. It is the act or process of putting information into context as also making sense of information from the situation or location in which the information was found. Research supports that contextualized instruction leads to better learning. In short, begin children's early learning from their environment, which they are familiar with and which they have already observed. Slowly, children will try and question and seek connections of facts to their origin and context. Such kind of contextualized experiences help them feel interested, motivated for school and ultimately, a feeling of success and achievement.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.1

Fill in the blanks:

(a) In ……,an effort is made to relate the content of the curriculum to the local environment.

(b) India is a……and multilingual nation.

(c) Developmentally appropriate ECCE curriculum keeps …… and …… level of children in consideration.

(d) An ECCE programme needs to be …… and can be improved to reflect new…….

(e) There is an immense diversity and children may find it difficult to adjust and learn as they all have diverse……...

12.3 PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY ECCE PLANNING

A high quality ECCE programme helps to ensure appropriate opportunities for all children keeping the focus on holistic development of the children. Thus, it is important to develop an ECCE programme balancing both children's development and contextual needs. The programme or ECCE curriculum should ensure a stimulating environment with diverse learning opportunities. According to the developmental characteristics, all children are naturally motivated to learn and are capable of learning. Young children learn when they have opportunity to:

- play
- observe and express
- form familiar and new experiences
- participate, engage and communicate

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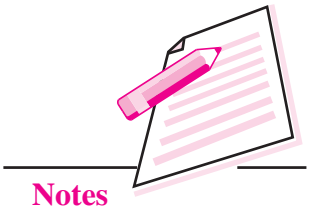
- experiment and explore
- ask questions
- imitate, enact and perform
- feel physically and emotionally safe

Keeping in view the objectives of ECCE and developmental characteristics of pre-school children,the MWCD, in its Curriculum Framework(2013)has talked about the following **Principles of Programme Planning:**

- The activities should be **age appropriate and developmentally appropriate.**
- Activities fostering all domains of development should be appropriately planned.
- **The attention span of young children is 15-20 minutes;** therefore, the duration of activities should be 20 minutes, with additional time allotted to winding up and initiation of the next activity. However, the programme should allow space and flexibility for need-based variations.
- There should be a **balance** between structured and unstructured; active and quiet; outdoor and indoor; self-directed and adult-initiated learning opportunities and individual, small group and large group activities.
- The learning experiences and activities should progress from **simple to complex.**
- A wide range of individual and group experiences should be planned. These should be **related to the child's environment,** are enjoyable and challenging for children.
- Routine fosters a sense of security in children. Therefore, some routine should be followed in the daily programme.
- The ECCE programme should never be rigid. It needs to be flexible.
- The duration of pre-school programmes **should be three to four hours.** The programme should provide for some rest period during the day and if it is of longer duration, like a full-day programme, nap time is to be ensured.
- Learning opportunities should be **interconnected, linking learning experiences across developmental domains** in a meaningful context, reflecting the real-life context of the children.
- The language used should be the **mother tongue** of the child. Efforts should be made to extend their language sensitively and introduce the school language gradually to facilitate school readiness.
- Curriculum goal and objectives should guide **classroom processes and**



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assessment of the children. The curriculum should be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family/ home values, beliefs and experiences.

- The programme should provide **opportunities for exploration and experiential learning,** promoting active engagement with people and objects in the environment.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.2

Fill in the blanks:

(a) A high quality ECCE programme helps to ensure opportunities for …….. ……..development of the children.

(b) The ECCE programme should provide opportunities for ……..and experiential learning to the children.

(c) Learning opportunities should be ……., linking learning experiences across developmental domains.

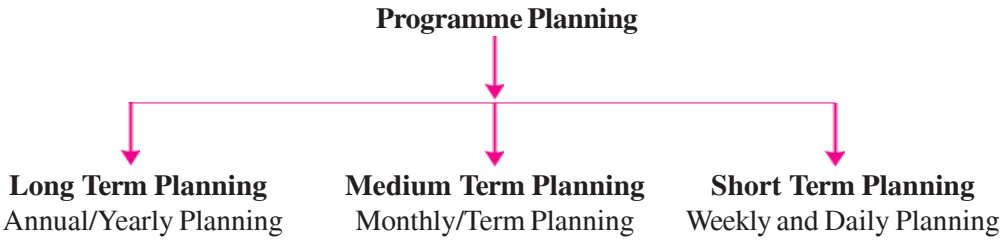
(d) The activities planned should be age and …….. appropriate.

(e) The routine followed in an ECCE programme should foster a sense of…… …… in children.

12.4 PLANNING AND DESIGNING AN ECCE PROGRAMME

Planning is essential for every aspect of human activities. In case of children's development, a complete absence of planning may leave the entire teaching learning process disorganised, and fail to achieve desired goals. ECCE curriculum should include activities for language, cognitive, physical and socio-emotional development of children as goals for planning.

Planning is usually organized over three different time scales, which are linked and follow on from each other. They are:-



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Broadly, there are two types of planning viz. Long Term Planning and Short Term Planning**.** Medium Term Planning is a part of Long Term Planning.

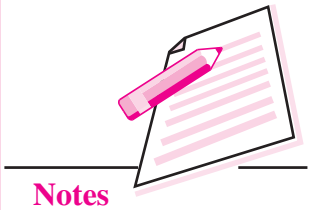
12.4.1 Long Term Planning means drawing up a plan for the whole year. At the beginning of each academic year, it is decided as to what to teach and how to teach for the next twelve months. This planning includes:

- Learning experiences and curriculum i.e. what children need to achieve during the preschool years
- Identification of skills and concepts
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Selection of themes for the whole year
- Development of schedules/calendar of activities on selected themes
- Play equipment and Teaching Learning Material (TLM) to be resourced
- Strategies to note progress in the learning
- Budgeting and allocation of funds for various expenditures, events, activities, repairs and maintenance

Medium Term Planning means monthly and term planning. After long term planning, monthly planning to decide themes and concepts need to be identified. Themes and concepts using child oriented methods and strategies benefit children. Monthly planning also assists in reflecting on how children engage and respond with space to modify strategies and improve the quality of the programme. Monthly planning contributes to mid-term planning with the aim of noting the progress made by the children. Term-wise planning is based on identifying themes and concepts that promote children's exploration and development in different domains such as enhancing mental functions, increasing skills in communication as well as social competence. Themes have to appeal and engage children so that they can display their skills and comprehension. Children's progress can be recorded and shared with parents and families. In short, this planning focuses on a term or a month.

From the year's plan, a monthly plan is drawn, which sets the goals for a fixed period of time and gives a broad outline of activities. Mid-term planning is the actual period of execution of work with children requiring consistent review of children's participation and response to the content. Content and methods of work can be modified based on how children engage and benefit.

12.4.2 Short Term Planning means weekly and daily planning**.** These plans are more specific than long term and medium term plans. Short term planning can address individual children's needs and interests. Listening to children and incorporating their needs by watching how they engage is a way to involve them actively in the planning process. Short term plans can be used to focus attention on particular children who may require additional support. In preparing short term plans, points to be decided are:



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- What resources are needed
- How to change and adapt the play environment
- What time in the day particular activities will take place
- Who will be there and what her/his role might be
- How the learning will be assessed

However, it is important to include the interest of each child in the plan developed for the group. Let us know more about short term planning in terms of weekly and daily programme schedules.

Weekly Planning: It is a part of short term planning. As themes involve planning for over a week or over a longer period, it may be better to identify sub-themes for different days of the week and then decide on the activities as per the daily programme /schedule to explore different aspects of the theme. It has been observed that thematic approach makes learning not only easy and interesting but also enables children to master basic concepts better. Let us find out the steps in developing a weekly plan:

- Selection of theme for the week
- Listing activities related to the theme
- Deciding daily schedule of activities such as what will be done on the first day, second day, etc.
- Setting goals for each activity
- Preparing material required for organizing each activity
- Organising and arranging the classroom environment according to the theme and the activities selected

Daily Plan/Schedule: This is often drawn up by the teacher to provide a systematic guide to activities during the day. Daily plan includes:

- Variety of activities that are offered inside and outside the classroom
- Organising resources the children will use
- Special arrangements with regard to ensuring children's participation
- Time given to different activities

Notes

The daily plan should reflect a balance of the following:

- Active and quiet activities
- Child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities
- Indoor and outdoor activities
- Individual, small group and large group activities
- Free and guided play activities

Goals to be achieved from planning for the whole year

There needs to be a clear ideas of the goals and steps to achieve them in planning the learning experiences for the whole year. Listed below are some goals necessary for helping children learn:

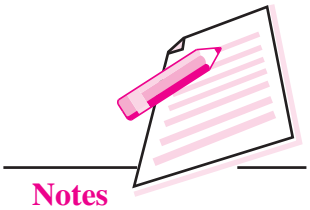
- Winning the trust and confidence of the children
- Inculcating healthy habits among children
- Ensuring personal safety of the children
- Development of the fine and gross muscles of the children
- Development of language skills
- Development of social skills
- Development of concepts like number, time, colour, form etc
- Development of independence
- Understanding of self and the environment
- Development of creative art and aesthetic appreciation

12.5 THEME BASED ECCE PROGRAMME

You have learnt the principles of programme planning. Let us now study how to do theme based planning.

Theme Based Planning

Integrated themes and projects form the core content of the ECCE programme or curriculum. These themes should be developed in a suitable manner so that it enables children to make meaningful connections among the different concepts and develop holistic understanding of the world around them. The preschool curriculum should be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children. It is to be ensured that the theme based ECCE programme is constructed to suit the diverse social, cultural and linguistic contexts in the country. The daily/weekly/



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monthly theme based programme should be prepared with a good selection of learning experiences that strengthen all domains of development and are age and developmentally appropriate. The activities for different domains and concepts should be planned purposefully to enable children to actively engage with and experience the concepts. These will help to consolidate the early learning and lay the foundation for the future.

12.5.1 Steps in Theme Based Planning

(a) Identify a Theme

The first step is to identify a theme and related sub-themes. Questions to consider during this step include:

- What content are children expected to learn as a result of participating in this theme?
- Is the theme right for the age and developmentally appropriate experiences.
- Do children have some understanding and background knowledge about this theme?

(b) Think and create activities, ideas and experiences for different themes

The second step involves brainstorming ideas for activities for each theme. It is often helpful to include children's ideas. Watching children during free play in school or in parks often provides ideas that will naturally appeal to children. Consider questions such as:

- Why am I choosing this activity?
- Are all the activities chosen age appropriate and developmentally appropriate?
- Are all the activities meaningful and relevant?
- Are the activities catering to all children?
- Are the selected activities and games according to the local specific context?

(c) Planning a Theme Web

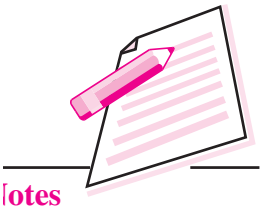
Now let's take a look at a sample web. This web takes a thematic approach but still focuses on areas. The chosen theme is 'Animals'. The teacher has to decide what s/he wants to include in the activity areas to allow the theme to be explored further. The activity areas need to have specific activities and learning material

Notes

related to the theme. The purpose of webbing is to brainstorm ideas for the theme. Let's look at Web-1 that shows different domains of development. Now, based on the same, think about any theme and start brainstorming ideas, activities and experiences for the theme. (See Web-2). Brainstorm activities for language, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, sensory and socio-emotional development.

Fig. 12.1 Web-1: A balanced ECCE Programme

(d) After webbing on a chosen theme, you need to bring it into the weekly/daily plan dividing the activities and experiences according to the needs, interests, age and context of children. You will read further on how to prepare a long term theme based plan for the three to six years age group monthly theme-based plan; weekly theme based plan and a daily schedule or plan.



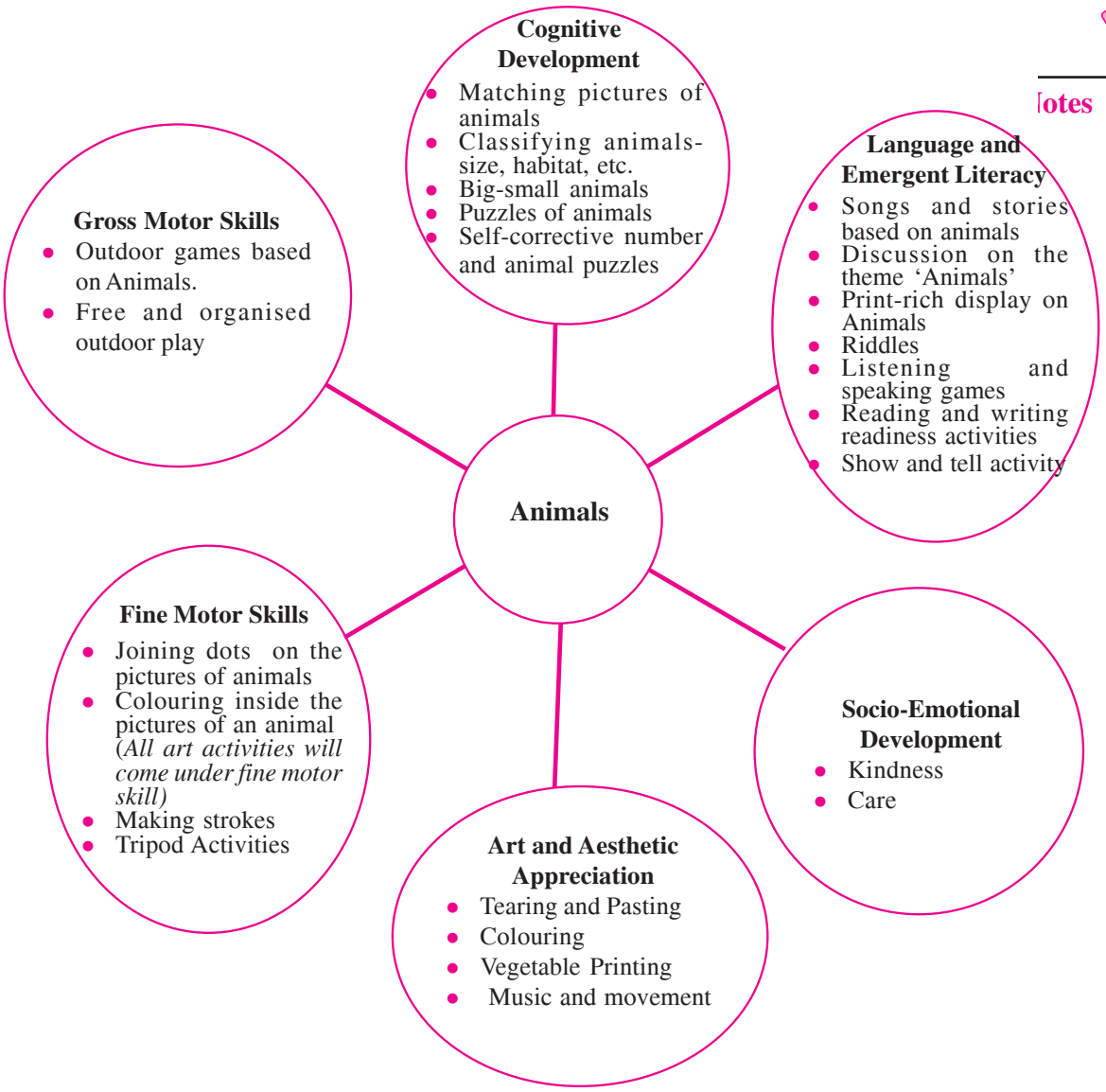


Fig. 12.2 Web Plan on the Theme "Animals"

Note: The teacher needs to provide activities and learning material related to the on-going monthly/weekly theme in the Activity Areas in the classroom.

Local festivals and celebrations may be added to make the theme planning contextual and local specific.

Sample of a full year Theme Based Planning (three to six years age group)		
Themes	**Activities**	**Material/Aids**
Adjustment to School Environment **Myself** *Celebration: Baisakhi(Festival)*	• Free and guided conversation on awareness of self (one's own name, name of father, mother and siblings), home address, school's and teacher's name • Parts of the body and their functions, cleanliness (good habits) • Stories and rhymes • Following simple instructions • Development of senses • Matching • Colour concept • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	Picture charts, cards (story, touch and odd man out), puppets, colour dominoes, creative art material, balls, dolls, beads, building blocks, puzzles, sound boxes, feely bag and classification cards, etc. Costumes for festival celebration
Myself, My Family (recap)**, My Neighbourhood**	• Free and guided conversation on my family, understanding relationships, respecting the feelings and rights of other children, relating well with adults by listening to them and following their instructions, empathy and care towards the old, people with special needs, the needy, care and nurturance towards plants, animals and other forms of life • Stories and rhymes • Development of senses (rough-smooth, smell) • Matching and identification • Concept of size (big-small) • Time concept (early-late) • Pattern making (three to four objects) • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	Simple one line riddles, cards (picture reading, touch, matching, classification, seriation and pattern making) materials with different smell, dominoes, same object of different size, indoor free play material, outdoor play equipment, material for creative art work and clay
Animals (Wild, Domestic and Pet animals; Common birds and insects; Aquatic animals)	• Free and guided conversation on wild, domestic and pet animals; common birds and insects, aquatic animals. Activities for imparting knowledge about their habitat, food, babies, usage/benefits, their care and nurturance. • Colour concept (primary colours) • Shape concept (basic shapes) • Pattern making • Matching, identification, naming, classification • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities • Role play, dramatisation, puppet play stories and rhymes, emotional development activities	Colour and shape dominoes, cards (picture reading, matching, picture), stories, rhymes, patriotic songs, music system, stick puppets (sun, moon, stars), dolls, beads, seeds, building blocks, puzzles, material for creative art work, clay

Transportation (Road, Air, Water) *Celebration: Teacher's Day*	• Free and guided conversation on road, water, air transport, safety rules related to transportation and teacher's day • Following simple instructions • Sound discrimination, vocabulary related to the theme • Development of speaking skill (show and tell) • Development of basic cognitive skills like classification, sequential thinking, concept of space(in-out), seriation, matching, identification and naming • Role play, stories and rhymes • Identification of different kinds of transport (air, water, road) naming transport, identifying and imitating sounds of different transport, observation and memory, classification, identifying, time concept (before-after) • Physical and motor development activities, creative and socio-emotional development activities	Puzzles (three pieces), cards (picture reading, matching, classification, what is missing, sequential thinking) riddles, toys, picture charts, indoor play equipment, outdoor play material, material for art and craft and clay work material
Vegetables Fruits Plant life *Celebrations:* • *Dussehra (Festival)* • *Gandhi Jayanti* • *Deepawali (Festival)*	• Free and guided conversation on vegetables, fruits, plant life, festivals and Gandhi Jayanti • Identification and naming of common fruits and vegetables, difference between fruits and vegetables, their washing, benefits of eating them, their colour, shape, taste and texture. Identification of fruits and vegetables, which are eaten with peel or without peel, grows above the ground or below the ground. Identification of trees, grass, climbers, flowers. • Development of basic cognitive skills like matching, problem solving, reasoning • Concept of space (over-under), height (tall-short), time (day-night, morning, afternoon and evening) and classification • Sorting (foodstuff like rice and grams mixed together), concept of thickness (fat/thick-thin)	Picture charts, cards (sorting, matching, pre-number concept, odd man out), cereals for sorting, puzzles, art and craft material for Deepawali decoration, free indoor play equipment, outdoor play equipment, raw fruits and vegetables, plants, pot for germination
• **Houses** • **Winter Season** *Celebration: Christmas*	• Free and guided conversation on need of house for humans and animals, about home family, vocabulary related to types of houses, different parts of the house, household objects, winter season, Christmas celebration • Visit to a construction site and zoo • Stories, poems and rhymes • Development of speaking skill and vocabulary • Visual description • Development of basic cognitive skills • Concept of shape, space (above-below) and time (before-after) • Recognition of position (front-back), recognition of temperature (hot-cold), relationships, classification, pattern making	Picture charts, matching charts, art and craft material for Christmas celebrations, cards (pre-number concept, sequential thinking, matching) outdoor play equipment, indoor free play equipment, puzzles

	• Sorting, identification and naming-sun, moon, stars, sky, water etc. • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	
Water *Celebrations:* • *Lohri (Festival)* • *Makar Sankranti (Festival)* • *Pongal (Festival)* • *Eid* • *Gurpurav* • *Republic Day*	• Free and guided conversation on importance of water for survival of living beings, common uses of water, importance of clean drinking water, sources of water, need for conserving water and avoiding its wastage, Lohri, Makar Sankranti, Pongal and Republic Day Celebration. • Development of basic cognitive skills through experiments/ demonstrations: floating and sinking, objects that dissolve and that do not dissolve in water, clothes dry in sun because water goes up to the sky (evaporation), properties of water (colour changes, taste changes if you add lemon, sugar, salt, etc.) • Stories, poems and rhymes • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	Tub, caps of bottles, picture charts, colours, brushes, glasses, beads, art and craft material, clay, salt, sugar, sand, twigs, marbles, feathers, origami paper to make boats
Community Helpers *Celebration: Basant Panchami*	• Free and guided conversation on need and importance of Doctor, Nurse, Tailor, Cobbler, Postman, Policeman, Driver, Milkman, Barber, Gardener/Mali, Porter, Teacher, Washer man/Dhobi and House help • Inviting community helpers to the preschool and to interact with the children • Development of listening and speaking skills • Stories and rhymes • Vocabulary related to the social environment and picture reading • Development of senses • Observation, remembering and recalling the activities of community helpers • Matching of tools and equipment of community helpers, missing game, seriation, classification (based on one concept at a time) and pattern making (3, 4 objects) • Concept of time (recap), pre-number (wide and narrow), number, part and whole relationship • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	Conversation charts, pictures of community helpers, matching cards, tools and equipment, doctor set, indoor play equipment, outdoor play equipment, dolls, building blocks, beads, puzzles.

Repetition of previous themes *Celebration:* *Holi (Festival)*	• Free and guided conversation on Holi • Stories and rhymes related to themes • Development of speaking skills (fluency and clarity of expression), listening skills (listening with comprehension), writing skills (drawing of circle, triangle, square) and reading skills (picture reading) • Experiencing air around them, blowing out air onto hands, air blows away light objects in the environment • Matching, identification and naming colours, shapes, big, small, more, less, tall, short, fat, thin, wide, narrow, far, near, recognise positions, e.g., in, out, over, under, front, back, above, below • Missing and memory game, seriation, classification, time and number concept, pattern making • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities	Colours, balloon, picture reading cards piston (pichkari), cards- for matching, crayons, shape, pre-number concept, number, sorting, seriation, dominoes, outdoor play equipment, indoor play material and building blocks

Note: Festivals and other occasions can be taken up for 'theme based conversation' as and when they occur. All festivals need to be celebrated in the preschool.

Sample - Daily Plan (4 hours)

Duration		*Activities*
09.00 am	09.30 am	Welcome Warming up exercises Health/Cleanliness inspection Prayer (rhymes, songs and dialogue with children)
09.30 am	10.00 am	Going to the classroom, settling down, informal attendance (who has not come today, why, what may be the reason) Language development activity may be based on theme (free conversation or guided conversation)
10.00 am	10.30 am	Outdoor activities, swings, slides, sand and water play, wheel toys, tricycles, etc.
10:30 am	11:00 am	Washing hands, Snack time
11:00 am	11:30 am	Rest, listening to rhymes, songs, or stories on a music system
11:30 am	12:00 pm	Activity for cognitive skill based on theme (structured conversation on theme)

Notes

12:00 pm	12:30 pm	Indoor free play in small groups, blocks, dolls, puzzles, constructive tools, etc.
12:30 pm	12.50 pm	Creative activity
12:50 pm	01:00 pm	Socio-emotional development activity (story, rhythmic movements, rhyme, dramatisation and role play)
01:00 pm		Dismissal

How to conduct activities for children in the age group of three to six years, separately on the sub-topic, 'Common Usage of Water'.

Objective: To familiarise children with the common uses of water.

Duration: Minimum two days (younger age group needs more time than the older age group)

Material: low cost –or no cost material, teacher made

Activities for children in the three to four year age group

Free conversation: Teacher may start a day with free conversation with children on common uses of water. (Note–: All children must be given a chance to speak). From free conversation teacher may proceed towards structured conversation related to water which will help children pick up more information about the uses of water and develop their vocabulary related to water. If there is a pet in the ECCE centre, children may been couraged to give it water to drink and be allowed to observe the animal drinking water.

Songs and rhyme: Singing songs and rhymes related to the use of water promoting language development, conducting music and movement and creative and aesthetic development activities.

Outdoor activity: Showing children a gardener watering plants, centre assistants mopping floor, water in the washroom being used by everyone for washing hands, water being used in the school kitchen, making tea using water, etc.

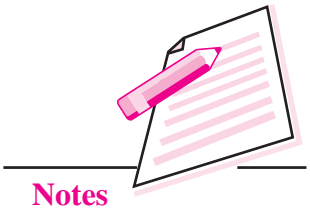
Water play: Letting children play with a small tub of water freely with containers of different shapes and sizes, some with holes, so that the water drips from them.

Field trip: Taking children out to observe a pond or lake, if it is nearby. Rhymes and songs related to water for developing vocabulary.

Activities for children in the four to six year age group

Guided conversation related to water. Using audio-video material, picture books with pictures of common uses of water can be used.

Role play: Encouraging children to think about uses of water. Getting children to dramatise different uses of water, each child can act out one use and the others can guess what it is.



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Drawing children's attention towards display of charts on uses of water.

Fine motor skills: Children can colour the pictures, do free hand drawing related to common uses of water.

Children can water plants and they can be told that if the plant is not watered, it turns yellow and dries.

Children may be allowed to wash their spoons and hands using water under teacher's supervision.

They may observe puddles of water and may like to play or float paper boats. Children can do this activity indoors too.

Children may be asked to observe their parents and family using water for different purposes and have a discussion next day in the class.

Teacher can focus on conducting simple experiments such as floating and sinking, things that dissolve and do not dissolve, observing wet clothes dry in sun, melting of ice-cubes left in the open, etc.

ACTIVITY 12.1

Design a weekly plan on any theme for preschool for four hours duration.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.3

State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Planning is usually organized over five different time scales.

(b) Long term planning means drawing up a plan for the whole year.

(c) Short term planning cannot address individual children's needs and interests.

(d) A classroom rich in pictures, posters and charts provides challenge, fun and excitement to the children, especially for theme teaching.

(e) Activity time can note that the children make choices about the activities in which they engage.

(f) It is important to schedule 40-50 minutes cleanup time, particularly after activity time, for children and teachers to participate in putting the classroom back into order.

ACTIVITY 12.2

Visit a preschool in your neighbourhood and study the daily schedule being followed and write a report of a hundred words.

Notes

12.7 APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND PLANNING AN INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL

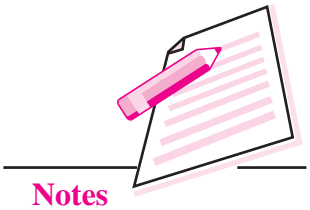
Children differ in their needs, interests and abilities. They develop in different ways at different places where the developmental process is consistent and every individual normally passes through each major stage of development. In ECCE centres or programmes often, despite being accessible to children, there is a mixed composition of children with multiple home language backgrounds, children following different religions, socio-economic conditions, urban-rural differences, quality of schooling or lack of it, diverse socio-cultural practices and food habits and so on. Gender is also a significant issue as girls and boys are treated quite differently in most social structures. Boys get more privileges and girls are often neglected. At the centre, one must ensure that there is no discrimination.

Hierarchies of caste, economic status and gender relations, cultural diversity as well as the uneven economic development that characterise Indian society also deeply influence access to education and participation of children in school. This is reflected in the sharp disparities between different social and economic groups, which are seen in school enrolment. Each child enters the school with different experiences and expectations. Hence, children need to feel that each one of them, their homes, communities, languages and cultures are valuable and their diverse capabilities are accepted; that all of them have the ability and the right to learn and to access knowledge and skills. Diversity refers to the range of similarities and differences among children, staff and families in an ECCE programme and community. It includes race, culture, abilities, gender and age. For the early learning and childcare experiences, it is important to recognise and respect diversity. This enhances each child's social and emotional well-being and promotes caring, cooperative and equitable interactions with others. Each child must feel a sense of belonging and feel positive about his or her own identity. When home and school cultures differ, it is important to resolve these cultural conflicts in a mutually respectable way. This can only be done through:

- open dialogue among families and teachers
- learning about each other's cultures and expectations
- respecting each individual's unique culture and identity

Providing opportunities for children to explore similarities and differences in a positive atmosphere supports respect for diversity. Self-esteem, confidence and emotional development are strengthened when children and families feel accepted and supported. Therefore, curriculum must:

- be context sensitive and culturally relevant
- foster caring attitudes and empathy



Notes

- respect diversity
- address gender issues and promote equal rights
- ensure learning of basic life skills

ECCE curriculum in most cases does not address this diversity from the perspective of ensuring inclusion and sensitivity towards all groups. This can be possible if this issue is dealt with comprehensively in teacher preparation so that every teacher can adapt the given curriculum to her/his immediate context.

Inclusive practices are intended to identify and remove barriers to full acceptance, participation and learning for all children. Inclusion recognises that many challenges associated with disability are embedded in socio-cultural attitudes and practices. Inclusion does not entail a one size fits all mainstream approach, but seeks to recognise and respond to diversity, without isolating children with special needs and removing them from everyday activities. Inclusive practices allow teachers to support individual needs with in the regular context.

Strategies for an inclusive ECCE centre**:**

- Encouraging social interactions
- Requesting help/suggestions from children's families
- Simplifying directions to children
- Modifying group activities to allow participation
- Providing extra help to teach skills
- Modifying the daily schedule
- Responding appropriately
- Giving physical assistance to participate in all programme routines and activities
- Assisting with the use of tools, play material, etc
- Rearranging the environment
- Obtaining parent permission to share information with other specialists
- Adapting toys and play materials
- Adapting an existing piece of furniture or equipment to meet individual needs

- Create space and time to sensitively discuss children's different backgrounds, cultures, family structures and abilities
- Introduce different cultures through stories and games.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.4

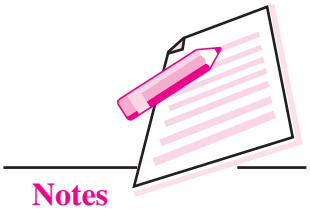
Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
(i) Inclusive education	(a) Ensures learning of basic life skills
(ii) Hierarchies	(b) Self-esteem, confidence and emotional development
(iii) Curriculum	(c) Race, culture, gender, etc.
(iv) Positive atmosphere	(d) Inclusive ECCE centre
(v) Diversity	(e) Caste, economic status

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- A good ECCE curriculum is defined as age appropriate, all round development, play based, integrated, experiential, flexible, and contextual.
- The ECCE Programme should include activities and experiences for holistic development.
- Principles of Planning - It should be flexible, balanced and integrated.
- The programme planning for preschools include:
  - Long Term Planning –Annual or Yearly planning
  - Medium Term Planning- Monthly Planning and Term Wise Planning
  - Short Term Planning- Weekly Planning and Daily Planning/Schedule
- Daily planning includes the entire schedule of the day in a preschool.
- Weekly Planning makes learning not only easy and interesting but also enables children to master the basic concepts better.
- Recognising and respecting diversity is very important to early learning and childcare experiences.



- Incorporating diversity and inclusion benefits children, families and staff because it helps develop a sense of belonging and strengthens understanding and acceptance of differences so that everyone can learn from each other.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Suggest two activities each for cognitive and socio-emotional development of four year old children.
2. Design any two activities for the language development of the children.
3. What are the guiding principles of an effective ECCE programme?
4. Discuss the various components of daily programme schedule.
5. Design a day's schedule for three year old children on any theme of your choice.
6. Write down the activities for children in the three-to four-year and five-to six-year age group (separately) on any theme of your choice.
7. What do you understand by the following terms?
   i. Inclusion
   ii. Diversity
   iii. Contextualisation

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

12.1

(a) contexualisation

(b) multicultural

(c) age, developmental

(d) developmentally appropriate, experiences

(e) backgrounds

12.2

(a) holistic

(b) exploration

(c) interconnected

Notes

(d) developmentally

(e) security

12.3

(a) False

(b) True

(c) False

(d) True

(e) True

(f) False

12.4

(i) d

(ii) e

(iii) a

(iv) b

(v) c

GLOSSARY

- **Contextualisation:** According to the children's environment/context/region specific.
- **Developmentally Appropriate ECCE Curriculum:** A programme designed to meet children's development and learning.
- **Diverse needs**: Varied/different needs of children.
- **Inclusion**: An approach where all children are included; where ALL children learn together in one classroom, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses.
- **Reinforcement**: The activities can be repeated by using different materials; by using additional material to strengthen the concept.
- **Stimulating environment**: Interesting, appealing and exciting classroom environment.

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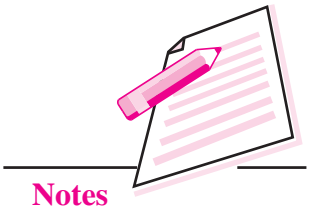

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WEB RESOURCES

- The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development available at www.excellence-earlychildhood.

13

HOW CHILDREN LEARN (EARLY LEARNING AND TEACHING)

The curriculum is the sum total of possible experiences that could be provided to children in early childcare centers. In the last lesson, we discussed the importance of taking account of children's social situations for each child to develop a sense of belonging. This lesson will convey patterns and variations of children's natural ways to learn. Interactions with children must be appealing to compel children's involvement and learning. There is utmost primacy of how the curriculum or content is used with children in early learning settings. Experiences fostering development in all domains must be included in a day keeping in mind the interdependence of growth in different domains.

Curriculum in preschool encompasses the entire range of preschool experiences and opportunities for learning designed and planned for the total and integrated development of children.

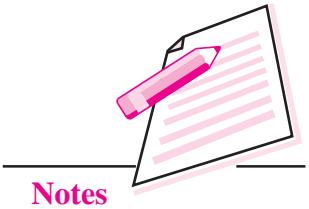
In a loosely structured manner, the curriculum for ECCE includes the entire day's activities; caregiving strategies with relative emphasis on all domains that is cognitive, emotional, or social values; and discretion to accept and use unplanned events as developmental experiences.

This lesson deals with developing an understanding of how children learn.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain how children have their unique methods of learning;
- discuss strategies and activities for various domains;



Notes

- describe the significance of arts as medium for expression and communication; and
- identify developmental variations and suggest appropriate interventions.

13.1 INDICATORS OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Babies are born ready to learn and their brain develop by use. In fact, it is often said that of the brain, 'use it or lose it'. What and how you serve the brain determines the returns. Human babies have the longest period of dependency making it imperative for the environment to be rich with a wide range of sensory inputs. We have to ensure that we are providing enough warm interactions of stoking children's sensory capacities to reach their optimal competence. Developmental milestones describe emergence of new capacity or skill. Neck control, creeping, crawling, standing, making sounds, responding to faces are all indicators of development in different domains. As they grow, they form different relations. No two children learn in the same way or at the same pace. Some children walk earlier while some may talk earlier. How we review that learning is occurring is by watching for changes also called as progress.

13.2 HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Children learn in different ways. Some learn by seeing, some by hearing, some by listening, some by doing. Giving your child chances to play with other children is a great way to develop skills needed to get on with others. As mentioned in earlier lessons, the time between birth to six years are filled with the natural desire to learn and to make meaning of the world around them. There is a possibility of tremendous social, emotional, physical and cognitive development, and it can come and go before you know it. It is necessary and essential to provide high quality stimulating experiences, opportunities of a wide variety to kindle and sustain children's interest in their surroundings and joy in learning.

For children, early learning is best through play, stories, conversations, songs, rhythm, movement and opportunity to explore.

Children learn best by actively engaging with the environment. This may, in the early years include:

Development capacity	Learning
• observing things, watching faces	responding to colour, shape, voices
• listening to sounds and rhythm	making sounds and singing
• exploring	learning by experiencing
• experimenting by turning things around	curiosity and interest

Notes

- asking questions like, "Why?"' solving problems
- experimenting with textures or objects categorizing and
- listening, mimicking, repeating, practising building skills
- moving to rhythm, repeating small stories memory, recall and sequence

13.2.1 Indicators of Progress

By progress, we mean that children have gained skills and competencies. In an ECCE centre, how would we gauge that children have benefitted from being in a learning setting? Regular observations, keeping daily records of individual child are some common methods.

Observations need to be in all domains of development. It is through such diary noting and records that parents are informed of their children's unique features as well as how they compare with age related behaviour referred as 'age norms'.

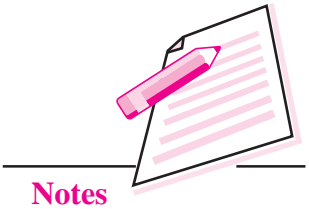
Building understanding of children's progress is when a child acquires milestones such as standing with support and then starts walking, climbing steps, jumping, holding a ball, being able to push and pull objects. Children gain cognitive progress when they are able to sit and listen to a story or engage in completing a puzzle. Social progress is defined when children are together and may play individually with blocks or share crayons while painting, wait for a turn on the swing etc. Learning to care, share, take turns and get along with others are important in the foundational years.

Children also learn communication skills, enrich their expressive vocabulary and participate in art, music and dance. They also acquire early numeracy and literacy as they display interest in similar sounds, identifying sounds with other similar sounds and repetition of numbers.

Children moving freely, asking questions, playing with each other, exploring, watching, sitting, listening or watching a puppet show, resolving conflict are often indicators of a dynamic early learning space. Often, children may face limitations and inability in completing tasks; they may be helped or allowed to understand limitations.

Children with varying abilities need to be supported with assertive design and architecture such as ramps, hearing devices and sound-rich inputs. Barrier-free and supportive interventions besides addressing ability, build empathy and awareness for co-existence.

Development opportunities have to provide variations in activities as development is integrated and growth is holistic as well as dependent on domain interdependence. For example, a child who is not healthy may not be active, while a socially aloof child may lose on group participation.



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13.3 DOMAINS OF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING AREAS

The principles and practices relevant to learning and development in the early years (National ECCE Curriculum Framework, 2013) are based on the insights and observations of thinkers and evidence from researches.

You have read in Module 2 that, development and learning take place in all domains. Development in one domain influences the other domains. A single experience may also impact multiple domains. The dispositions developed in one domain often influence young children to learn in other areas.

Children are thinking, feeling and interacting human beings and it is important to give them experiences to touch, feel, observe, listen and express. The early years of development are critical and the brain's plasticity is enhanced by sensorial inputs with emphasis on integrated and holistic development in accordance with age and developmental needs of the child.

Let us study about different areas of development in connection with planning a balanced ECCE curriculum.

13.3.1 Physical-motor development: It includes gross motor skills; coordination of fine muscles with dexterity; eye- hand coordination; sense of balance, physical coordination, and awareness of space and direction; nutrition, health status and practices.

13.3.2 Language Development and Communication

From birth, children make sounds, listen and respond orally. Children learn to speak and understand in a language-rich environment. This domain encompasses listening and comprehension; oral skills/speaking and communicating; vocabulary development; pre-literacy/emergent literacy skills like phonological awareness; print awareness and concepts; letter-sound correspondence; recognition of letters; building words and sentences and early writing and introduction to language of school transaction.

13.3.3 Cognitive Development

Curiosity, asking questions to know concepts, words to build pre-number and number concepts comprise elements of cognition. Knowledge or skills related to comparing, classification, seriation, conservation of space and quantity, one-to-one correspondence, counting, spatial sense; patterns and estimations in measurement develop with engagement and play. Other skills also relate to cognitive growth such as data handling; skills related to sequential thinking, critical thinking, observing, reasoning and problem solving; and knowledge of concepts related to the physical, social and natural environment. ***Sensory and Perceptual Development*** based on development of the five senses through visual, auditory and kinesthetic experiences is crucial for mental functions.

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Development of Creative and Aesthetic Appreciation

It is about involvement in different art forms, expression and appreciation for dance, drama and music.

13.3.4 Personal, Social and Emotional Development

It refers to development of self-concept; self-control; life skills or self-help skills; habit formation; initiative and curiosity; engagement and persistence; cooperation; compassion; social relationships; group interaction; pro-social behaviour; expressing feelings, accepting others' feelings.

13.4 INTERDEPENDENCE OF DOMAINS OF DEVELOPMENT

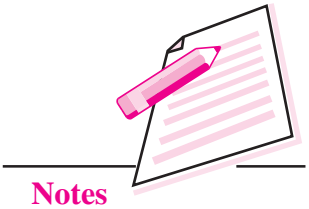
Learning during the early years grows with effective transaction of the ECCE curriculum that promotes holistic development of children. Development in domains is not in isolation but in an integrated manner. It is important to understand that deprivation in any one domain influences all domains. If children are physically weak, have low mobility or are listless, it will make them low on attention, participation and may be ignored, thus becoming irritable. These children may require intervention and extra attention.

Secondly, the interdependence of domains has to be seen in transaction of activities. Storytelling is largely a language activity, however it enhances imagination, social skills in listening together and content may appease emotions. Children in outdoor play may be centrally focusing on exercise of physical and motor skills, however they learn social skills by having to take turns on the swing, sharing play equipment and other such moments.

Early learning curriculum require to be wide ranging keeping in mind all around development and also different needs of children.

13.4.1 Features ensuring learning in all domains:

- Observe children to identify their needs and capabilities
- Develop responsive relationship with children as transaction within the classroom is a journey of mutual learning between children and the teacher
- Ensure holistic development through challenging activities
- Respect children's social environment as emotional security influences classroom attention
- Focus on planning and conducting activities as well as processes of interaction modifying according to children's responses
- Create a nurturing and positive relationship with children and among children



- Ensure social inclusion of children with disability in the ECCE classroom
- Identify areas of intervention and regulation
- Work in partnership with parents as they are valuable resources

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.1

I State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Changes or development in one domain facilitates or hinders the development of another domain.

(b) Development of various concepts come under cognitive development.

(c) All domains of child development are not interrelated.

(d) Print awareness is a part of emotional development

II Answer briefly:

(a) List some ways to note children's progress?

13.5 PROMOTING LEARNING

Learning in different domains is impacted by the nature of interaction strategies used during early years. The strategies are essentially to be based on child-centered approach. Hence, play and activity-based approach cater to the needs, interests, abilities and social context of the children. The teaching-learning approach should be inclusive so that all children feel emotionally safe to engage, with no feeling of discrimination.

Activity is a part of a well-planned series of experiences identified by the teacher for children aimed at a particular learning area/areas and not an isolated learning experience.

While doing an activity, children are actively engaged both physically and cognitively. An activity needs to be challenging enough for children allowing them to practice and apply already acquired skills and knowledge in a variety of ways, across many situations. Attempt to provide pleasurable activities is central to the well-being of children. Uniformity or being judgmental is obtrusive to learning. Play stimulates curiosity and exploration and leads to mastery of body controls, encourages creativity and social skills and develops emotional balance and language skills.

13.5.1 Play and activity-based transactional strategies provide learning experiences to children in concrete form. Play situations help children to become an active participant and not a passive recipient in the learning process. Such an

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approach provides balanced, process-oriented programmes that fulfill all developmental objectives. It nurtures development of learning processes like observation, experimentation, problem-solving and creativity in children, while at the same time, caters to the promotion of their physical, language and social development.

13.5.2 Opportunity for learning in all domains happens through mediums that allow expression and participation. Group and individual play activities provide immediate feedback for children's orientation to learning processes.

Below is the box which will help you to understand play based activities:

Some Common Activities for All-Round Development

- Free and structured conversation - Storytelling and storymaking - Dramatisation - Rhymes and songs - Music and movement - Free indoor play with puzzles, beads, blocks, etc. - Outdoor play	- Sand play - Water play - Puppet play - Circle/group and activities - Structured cognitive and language activities with play material - Nature walk - Fieldtrips/outings

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.2

Fill in the blanks:

(a) ECCE teaching and learning strategies are essentially ..... .

(b) The teaching-learning approach should be _____, that is including all children.

(c) Play stimulates ..... and ..... body.

(d) ..... strategies provide learning experiences to children to become an active participant in the learning process.

13.6 PLANNING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES FOR DIFFERENT DOMAINS/AREAS

Providing children with regular everyday rhythms foster emotional security. However, children have a unique pace as well as they have short attention spans. Caregivers need to be open to flexibility in their transaction as well as to modify for specific children.

13.6.1 Health and Physical well-being:

Physical and motor development of children is crucial to their learning and is influenced by many factors, such as genetic inheritance, nutritional status, general physical conditions as well as opportunities for movement and exercise.

Activities would include giving a nutritional supplement in the ECCE centre to compensate for any nutritional deficiencies in the home diet. Milk, sprouted pulses, protein biscuits, green vegetables with porridge (dalia), idlis, fruits can be suggested for the school snack. Helping children develop good food habits through songs, rhymes and stories will increase their orientation to nutrition and health.

Health is also dependent on preventive practices such as immunization which is a schedule of preventing different diseases. Good health ensures that children stay healthy and active. Outdoor play with swings, slides, jungle gym allow children to use their muscles. Running, jumping, hopping, pulling and pushing are moments of play that also assist in developing more complex motor skills. There is a need to monitor physical, health and motor development an a regular basis.

13.6.2 Motor Development

You have studied that physical and motor development of children is influenced by many factors. Motor development depends on neural and muscular maturation. Children cannot learn any skill until they are ready for it. Motor development follows a predictable pattern. There are individual differences in the rate of motor development. Though the sequence remains the same, the specific age at which different children reach different stages differ from child to child depending upon the experiences and opportunities. You have read in Module 2 that motor skills are of two types: gross motor skills and fine motor skills.

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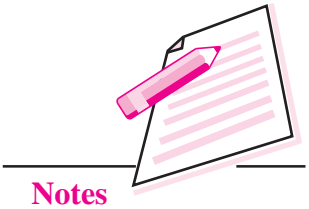
Fig. 13.1 Activities–Fine Motor Development

Examples of gross motor skills are walking, balancing, running, jumping, creeping, crawling, rolling, swinging, hopping, climbing (ascending and descending), rhythmic movement, playing with a ball, throwing, catching and kicking. **Fine motor skills** may include threading, tearing, cutting, pasting, drawing, colouring, painting, printing, paper folding, clay work, sorting, pattern making, using manipulative material, pouring etc. Activities for fine muscle coordination are related to muscular control of the eyes, hands and fingers as well as coordination of eye and hand movement. These activities lead to development of self-help skills like self-feeding and self-dressing. Pre-writing, drawing, painting, clay modelling, play with manipulative materials are activities that develop and strengthen eye- hand coordination.

Fig. 13.2 Gross Motor Development

13.6.3 Language Development

Learning language is crucial for children in early childhood since it provides the foundation for later learning. Children learn language through imitating others around them, encouragement from others and opportunities for listening to and expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings. Children differ in the levels and quality of language acquired by them. Some start talking early, others start late. Some



are highly talkative, while others are quiet. To some extent, these differences may be inherited, but to a large extent, they are due to the kind of environment the child gets. By the time children come to preschool, they are already using a language at home.

Given the right experiences and environment, their vocabulary increases steadily and rapidly. Educated parents, exposure to toys, pictures, storybooks, newspapers and a variety of objects around them, opportunities for listening good quality conversation, stories, rhymes, songs, etc., opportunities for talking and expressing their ideas to adults and other children, opportunities for play, exposure to television, radio, puppet shows, outings and excursions extend their experiences.

Children from disadvantaged homes, or where parents do not get enough time to interact with their children, often do not get the benefit of all these experiences. This deprivation can be compensated to a considerable extent through a meaningful preschool programme. As far as possible, the medium of interaction in early childhood must be home language of the child.

Major areas that need attention for transaction of language and early literacy activities are:

- Development of listening skills (sound discrimination, listening span, listening comprehension).
- Development of vocabulary related to body, home and environment (physical, natural and social environment).
- Development of speaking skills and oral expression (conversation, story-telling, dramatisation, puppet play, picture reading, creative self-expression).
- Development of reading readiness (auditory/sound discrimination, visual discrimination, auditory-visual association, left-to-right directionality).
- Development of writing readiness (fine muscle development, eye-hand coordination, letter perception).

Children improve language and literacy by activities like narrating and listening to stories, conversation on project/theme, recalling the story, simple riddles, group games, listening to clues and completing a thought. Simple tasks of picture reading, helping children follow simple instructions, spotting the odd man out are good for recall and expressive vocabulary.

Activities of performance: Action rhymes, dramatisation, role play, puppet play, oral expression, nature walk, creating sentences using vocabulary related to home, body, fruits, vegetables, etc., are essential for developing listening, expressing and speaking skills. These activities can be done with three to six year olds and also with six and eight years olds. For older children, complexity of the story or instruction may be increased. Free conservation helps children express and share

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when they come in the morning or when they reach home. They must be encouraged to speak without too much correction. If children's sentences are incorrect, they should not be immediately stopped, Repetition or rephrasing keep children confident. Sharing stories as daily schedule of the ECCE programme helps build communication. Stories need to be short, age appropriate and be narrated with both facial and voice expressions.

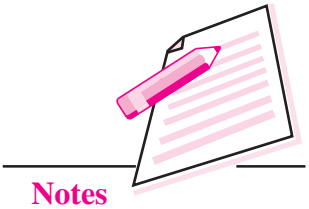
Development of Reading and Writing Readiness: Readiness is a stage when children are mature and ready to learn something without any stress. Reading and writing readiness refers to the ability of children to profit from any reading and writing instruction. Some amount of visual and discrimination activities are conducted with children right from three years onwards. More systematic focus on specific activities for reading and writing readiness is needed by the time the children are four-and-half to five years and ready for these activities. Activities like identification of sound in the environment, discriminating sound in the environment, identification of beginning sounds, rhyming words, antakshari, matching, odd-man-out, spotting the difference, classifying objects/pictures of objects beginning with a given sound, matching pictures with verbal words, etc. support in developing reading and writing readiness. Five to six year old children are normally in Class I of primary school. If, they are in ECCE centres, they can be given some exposure to the letters of the alphabet and small words. Children at early primary classes can match the sound with letters of the alphabet, match pictures of an object with the initial letter of the name of the object and match pictures with words.

Writing readiness requires activities for small muscle development, eye-hand coordination, handling of writing material and for letter perception. It is not advisable to introduce formal writing since children are at a developmental level when their fingers and eye muscles still need strengthening and coordination.

13.6.4 Cognitive Development

Cognition refers to the process of knowing and understanding the environment around us. Cognitive development is the development of observation, classification, sequential thinking, problem solving and reasoning which are basic to get to know the environment. Providing mediation with dialogue, action and direction by adults

Fig. 13.3 Activities–Cognitive Development



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make children curious, with a desire to explore and experiment.The thought process of children keep getting evolved as they grow. Children between three to six years of age are at pre-operational stage of cognitive development. They think from their limited perspective and are slowly able to do logical and abstract thinking. They learn through concrete and first-hand experiences. Play and activity are key sources in their learning to build their power of reason and problem solving..

Major areas that need attention for cognitive development are:

Sensory and perceptual development: Children learn through their senses. Use of senses is basic to the process of knowing and understanding. Senses are the gateway of knowledge. The more varied and extensive these experiences, the broader will be the base for children to form ideas about the world. Any kind of sensory deprivation or limitation may lead to development of incomplete or distorted concepts. Greater attention needs to be on development of the five senses (seeing, hearing, touch, smell, taste) through plenty of activities and opportunities.

Development of cognitive skills: These include memory and observation, classification, sequential thinking, problem-solving and reasoning. The teacher needs to develop and plan activities and experiences for all these cognitive skills.

Formation of basic concepts: Concept is a mental construction or picture of a class of objects, people, places and phenomena. For example, if children have developed a concept of colour, they will be able to classify or categorize objects in the environment on the basis of this dimension. Formation or development of basic concepts in children is crucial to their understanding of the environment. Only if they have the clarity of these concepts will they be able to observe, discriminate and categorize the different objects in their environment and progress from perception-bound reasoning to logical reasoning. For development of any concept, the activities are planned in the sequence like Matching (children match at perceptual level), Identification (e.g. what is red? children include concept in their passive vocabulary) and Naming (e.g. what colour is that?) where children include concept in their active vocabulary).

Let us see the example of pre-number concepts:

Pre-number concepts: It is recommended that children master the following pre-number concepts before proceeding with instruction to specific numbers:

Big, small, same as (in size); long, short, same as (in length); heavy, light, same as (in weight); tall, short, same as (in height); fat/thick, thin, same as (in thickness);wide, narrow, same as (in width); more, less, same as (concept of

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mass/quantity); far, near, same as(in distance).It helps children make a correct assessment about the value of a number before they understand the more complex mathematical principles. If mathematics is imposed on children before they have developed pre-number concepts, then they end up simply memorising and are likely to run into trouble when they are expected to apply their knowledge to more advanced levels of reasoning.

Before coming to number concept, the teacher needs to provide lots of number readiness activities that include activities for all cognitive skills followed by pre-number activities.

Number concept: Number is an abstract concept which comes to our mind after counting things. Developing a concept of numbers in terms of the irrelative value; number symbols; counting and placing the numbers in order needs to be part of the curriculum. Children are familiar with numbers because they have seen these on telephone instruments, addresses, speedometers, page numbers, newspapers, calendars and so on, but they have no experience with mathematical operations. In the early years, all learning occurs through play rather than through didactic communication. Therefore, instead of rote learning of the number sequence, children need to learn and understand, in the context of small sets, the connection between word games and counting, and between counting and quantity. Making simple comparisons and classifications along one dimension at a time, and identifying shapes and symmetries, are appropriate skills to acquire at this stage.

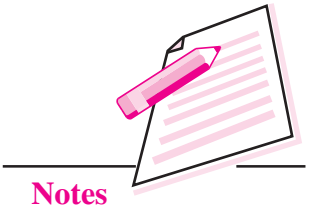
Development of environmental concepts: Children learn from their environment. The immediate environment of children can be categorized into:

- Natural environment (animals, birds, insects, vegetables and fruits, plants)
- Physical environment (water, air, sky, earth, seasons,weather)
- Social environment (self and family, transport, community helpers, festivals)

These environmental concepts may be taken up as projects and may form part of a theme for all activities to be conducted with children. The concepts discussed earlier; i.e., colour, number, shape, time, temperature, etc., can be introduced to children through these themes also.

13.6.5 Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This refers to the development of those characteristics or behaviors that help children adjust to their social environment. Emotional development provides the base for social development. The family, particularly the parents become the primary agents of socialisation. Other agents which include peers, teachers, neighbours and even mass media play a significant role in social development. When children come to preschool, they are generally egocentric, see and feel things only from their own point of view. They are also more used to individual or



solitary play or parallel play i.e. play by the side of another child, are used to one-to one interaction with parent are given and are not yet capable of pro-social behaviour like cooperation, sharing and helping.

A major objective of the ECCE centre is to help children progress from ego-centric towards socio-centrism i.e. towards playing with others, helping others and generally getting socialized. The ECCE centre needs to provide a trust worthy and secure environment so that children adjust to the activities of the centre, develop good habits, maintain personal hygiene and cleanliness, develop proper eating habits, use the toilet correctly, wash hands before and after meals, puts away objects after playing and keep the environment clean.

It also includes developing positive self-concept, social manners like sharing and cooperating with others, respecting others' rights and property, waiting for one's turn, independence and leadership, cooperating with teachers and other adults, etc.

Therefore, the most important needs of children that the ECCE centre must address are the need for security and acceptance. When children come to the centre, they leave home for the first time and the challenge is to adjust to the new environment. The centre/preschool must provide the kind of environment that will help them in this adjustment.

There are also wide individual differences in behaviour, characteristics and abilities of children. Each child has a unique personality. Emotional development provides base for social development. Opportunities for children must be provided through creative drama, role play, music and movement and creative activities to express emotions.

Children often develop behavioural disorders, for example, unusually aggressive behaviour, withdrawn or unusually shy behaviour, undue anxiety, hyperactivity, regression (i.e. going back to earlier infantile forms of behaviour, for example bed-wetting and nail biting).An understanding of the problem by parents and teachers and a reassuring attitude to help children overcome the anxieties and fears will enable them to get over these behavioral disorders. Punishment is not desirable since it only adds to the humiliation and anxiety.

During early childhood years, the concept of gender also develops among children. Sex-role stereotypes are also formed around this stage. The teacher and other adults including parents should not encourage differences in expected behaviours from boys and girls. They should treat all children alike and not have favourities. In achieving all this smoothly, the teacher needs to be familar with the home environment of every child in the class by maintaining regular contact with the parents. This calls for quality partnership between teachers, parents and other caregivers.

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13.6.6 Art and Aesthetics

All children have the potential for creativity although they may differ in the degree of creativity. Creativity does not take place in a vacuum. The more experiences children have, the better are the foundations on which they will build their creative efforts. A stimulating and encouraging environment promotes creativity in children. Opportunities and facilities for free play, dramatic and constructive play fosters creativity in children. An authoritarian and strict atmosphere in the ECCE centre may impede the development of creativity in children.

Major areas that need attention for development of creative and aesthetic appreciation are:

- **Creative and aesthetic appreciation through arts–** Activities like drawing and colouring, painting, printing, tearing, cutting and pasting, making a collage, clay modelling, paper folding, etc. may be the part of the curriculum.
- **Creative movement:** Children may be engaged in activities like action rhymes, rhythmic movement like dancing, finger clicking, foot stamping and clapping to a beat.
- **Creative drama–** Activities to suggestions like, walk like an elephant, hope like a rabbit, etc. Dramatising stories or situations by creating their own dialogues and actions and games like dumb charade promote creativity.
- **Creative thinking-** Free play, dramatic and make-believe play, constructive play need to be promoted. Open ended questions stimulate imagination and enhance creativity. Creating stories and rhymes promote creativity.
- **Development of aesthetic appreciation -** Developing sensitivity towards colour and beauty in the environment is essential. Simple activities such as decorating the classroom, making the classroom display attractive and relevant at the eye level of the children, change of classroom displays as often as feasible, nature walks and outings, drawing children's attention towards beauty of nature and encouraging them to verbalise their appreciation, promotes aesthetic appreciation. Aesthetic experience through music and art can easily be a part of the daily routine like, beginning the day with songs, group movements and the physical exercises. Each day needs a time for [illegible]gs, when children can repeat songs or rhymes and enjoy.

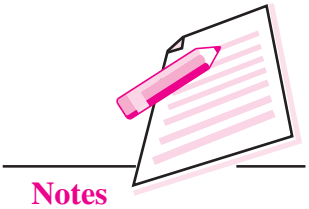
INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.3

Answer the following:

(a) Write any two cognitive skills that need attention at the ECCE stage.

(b) List any three pre-number concepts.

(c) List any two activities for personal, social and emotional development.



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13.7 IDENTIFYING DEVELOPMENTAL VARIATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

All children are similar in some ways like to touch, walk, run, jump, talk and yet there are many differences in ways that they grow. What are these variations? We will discuss the differences in the pace of development and how should children be observed, and when these differences need attention. We have been discussing appropriateness of age-related activities that appeal to young children prompting them to engage, explore and enjoy. If some children show resistance to get involved, as an adult you must make a note of it. If this behaviour of staying aloof is repeated, the children have to be attended to.

It is natural for children to have an interactive relation with people, objects or even events in their immediate surroundings. If a child shows indifference to surroundings, it is advisable to watch the child. In fact, children at particular ages tend to do have similar behaviours, achieve certain competencies and attempt to take small challenge.

Acquiring age-related skills and behaviours reflect progress and growth in different domains. It is important to also know that no two children grow at the same rate and each child has a specific pace.

In an ECCE centre,some children will often be more active than others while some may be quiet, shy, reserved and almost aloof. Behaviour of both children will need attention and intervention if it continues and some children resist regulation. Some common variations can be:

Behaviour variations	Domain	Nature of intervention
Delayed milestones	Physical and motor	Nutrition, sensory stimulation, activity
Repetitive behaviours like rocking, or banging	Multiple domains. Pediatrician	Refer for professional help
Quiet and aloof	Socio-emotional	Art, drama, movement and conversation
High level of energy	Socio-emotional or physical	Sit down with slow activities such as colouring
Resistance to others or outdoor play	Socio-emotional or can be physical	Encouraging art, expression, conversations
Frequently asking questions	Cognitive	Encouraging turn taking
Display competence in any skill like art, numbers or music	Cognitive, language	Facilitate exposure and opportunity for skill building

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WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

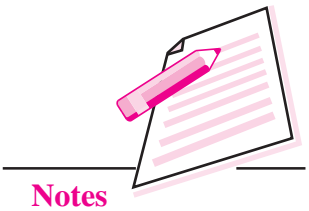
In this lesson, you have learnt that:

- ECCE must be based on a holistic and integrated perspective, taking into account the various domains of development, the characteristics of children at each sub-stage, and their learning needs.
- Children have a natural desire to learn and make sense of the world around them. Learning in the early years must hence be directed by the children's interests and priorities. It should be contextualised by the experiences of children rather than being structured formally. Play and activity-based experiences should be provided to young children.
- Teacher must ensure an enabling environment that is rich in stimulation and experiences that allows children to explore, experiment and freely express themselves, and one that gives them a sense of warmth, security and trust.
- Playing, music, rhyming, art and other activities using local materials along with opportunities for speaking, listening and expressing themselves, and informal interaction are essential components of learning at this stage.
- No formal teaching of 3Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic) at preschool stage.
- Each child is unique in needs, requirements, abilities and interests. It is important to create an inclusive environment for all children, including children with disabilities.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you mean by curriculum in the context of ECCE?
2. List all the domains of child development.
3. Suggest some activities to develop children emotionally and prevent the development of behavioral disorders?
4. Why should young children be provided with ample fine motor and gross motor development activities?
5. What are the areas that need attention in language development?
6. Mention some activities that would foster creativity among young children.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS



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13.1

I. (a) True

(b) True

(c) False

(d) False

II If children are active, asking questions , playing and exploring objects, they are giving signs of progress.

13.2

(a) child-centered

(b) inclusive

(c) curiosity and exploration

(d) play and activity-based

13.3

(a) Memory and observation, classification, sequential thinking, problem solving and reasoning.

(b) Big, small, same as (size), long, short, same as (length), heavy, light, same as (weight), tall, short, same as (height), fat/ thick, thin, same as (thickness), wide, narrow, same as (width), more, less, same as (mass/quantity), far, near, same as(distance).

(c) Activities for personal-social development are playing with others, being with others, helping others,socialising, developing good habits, maintaining personal hygiene and cleanliness, developing proper eating habits, using toilet correctly, washing hands before and after meals, putting away objects after playing and keeping environment clean, cooperating, respecting etc.

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14

METHODS OF CHILD STUDY

The transformation of an infant, totally dependent on adults, into an independent person with complex abilities has always attracted much attention. There are many early accounts, recorded as Baby Biographies by different scholars, of how children learn. Charles Darwin, working on biological diversity, wrote a book *On the Origin of Species* and also documented his son's acquisition of language. Many years later, Piaget provided a deep understanding of emergence of thought and language in children by observing and keeping detailed notes of his children. He later talked to many children at play to understand development of morality in childhood.

The unique features of childhood have captured the imagination of different poets and writers. Systematic records of children's lives appear in poetic versions of childhood.

In the context of India, Tulsidas and Surdas have written about Rama and Krishna, describing poetically their childhood with an interface with divinity.

Piaget improved on the idea of baby biographies and presented a systematic and more scientific procedure to recording childhood actions. Earlier studies on the socialization of children focused on adults to understand how children responded and how they learn. In recent years, there has been growing understanding of recognizing children's potential to be actively making meaning of their physical social world. In keeping with children's skills and experiences within a context, more child-oriented ways based on mediums that promote children's expression have evolved.

In order to understand children's behaviour and thought more systematically, it is important to know specific techniques of studying children. In this lesson, you will study some of the methods and ways of researching children's development.

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain various methods of child study;
- describe how children express themselves through art; and
- explain ways of reporting the progress of children.

14.1 RESEARCH AND STUDY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Research with children builds our understanding of their behaviour, nature of responses and ways in which they learn or why they ask questions. We may believe children behave in a particular manner but in our interactions with them in varied situations, we may be surprised to find that they are different from what we had thought. Children's skill acquisition may vary according their specific social group. Parental expectations may also differ from group to group. Often parents feel that children are not reading enough or teachers may observe that parents are not taking enough interest. Such observations would be speculations till a systematic examination could be built as evidence in support of or to negate the hunch. Conclusion of any kind can only be made after collecting data from the sample population. The facts collected would be categorized and analyzed to arrive at a conclusion. This process of investigating and deriving inference from a body of facts and figures comprises research. It can be of many kinds with several ways of collecting data referred to as techniques of studying human behaviour.

Let us study different types of research designs that guide research on children.

14.1.1 Types of Research Design

Research design is framework or detailed procedures for carrying out the research systematically. The nature of the problem to be studied guides the selection of the research design. The participants (sample) are selected from sections of social groups depending on the nature of the problem. In the case of children, one has to ensure that the selected methods and techniques are well thought out, age-appropriate and not heavily dependent on print.

Cross Sectional Research: is a way of collecting data from a group of people of different ages at a particular time. This group is matched for all features such as socio-economic status and educational background. This type of research is quick as the data is gathered at one point of time.

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Longitudinal Research: is a study of research issues collecting information from a set of people at different intervals of time over a decided period. To study the selected problem, the sample is followed over time and data is gathered from the same set of participants at different points of time. Even though rich and useful information is gathered, such studies are expensive and difficult to sustain.

Case Study: It is an in-depth study of individuals, groups or institutions. This kind of study is done using several techniques. In the Case Study approach, both standardized as well as other techniques of study can be used.

Experimental Design: It is a research design in which two or more groups are compared under similar conditions where each group may get a different treatment (intervention).For example, in the experimental design involving two groups, the group which receives the intervention is called the control group and the other group under study which does not receive the intervention is called the experimental group.

14.2 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF STUDY

It is important to identify the methods or techniques of gathering data depending on the age of the children or their literacy level as there are many different ways to engage with children. Although, the methods are based on ordinary and everyday experiences of human beings like talking and watching other people, however, the difference in scientific study is that they are systematic, reliable, standardized and valid methods. Under different methods, different tools are used to collect data from the participants.

14.2.1 Selecting a Tool

Once the basic design is decided, the next step is to identify the method for data collection. This method would be decided keeping in mind the age, educational background and the nature of the research problem. For example, infant studies would rely more on observation, and large-scale investigations of educational practices can be conducted through a questionnaire. Attitudes and choices of illiterate populations can be gathered through interviews. Also, nuances of interactions are captured best through interview method. A good tool must possess certain characteristics discussed below.

- **Reliability:** Implies that on repeated use, tools should give consistent or stable results. For example, the results obtained from the tool should remain the same regardless of the time of administration of the tool and the researcher.

- **Validity:** This refers to the fact that the tool should assess or measure what it is supposed to measure, and not something else. For example, a test of intelligence, should be meaningful for intelligence and not some other quality.

- **Standardisation:** It is a process of establishing the reliability and validity of the tool by administering it on a large population.This means that the test has to be administered and scored in a consistent manner for the entire population.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.1

A. State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Observing a selected group of children at regular intervals is a longitudinal study.
2. Children cannot be part of research study as they have to grow.
3. Reliability is when, on repeated use, questions are understood differently.
4. Validity is when the technique measures what it is supposed to measure.
5. Standardized tests are constructed on large populations to ensure their worth and value.

B. List the different types of research designs.

14.2.2 Observation

Observation is a method for understanding changes during early childhood and gaining insightful learning regarding behaviour patterns of children. It is a useful technique of studying young children, and also as a supplement to other techniques. It is the systematic observation of activities of the person who is under observation. To observe means to examine an object, or an individual, or group of people, or an event with all of the senses. Observation being directly observing behaviour with the purpose of describing, it helps in recording changes to discuss with parents or write reports on children. In observations, it is important to plan the procedure before-hand to ensure good results. Some examples of methods of observation and recording include:

Time-Sampling: requires taking short and uniform time periods to observe to note down children's behaviour. For example, taking observation notes of the bahaviour under study after a gap of every 15 minutes.

Event Sampling: Can be used for noting only specific behaviours like language or aggression.

Checklist: a list of parameters on which the teacher (or parent or other adult) checks the behaviours or traits observed during the period of observation. An observer may observe an activity or an event and then complete a checklist on whether or not key behaviours occurred.

Specimen Description: when using specimen description, the observer records children's behaviour and all events that are before and subsequent to the behaviour. The observer may write notes on everything that happens in his or her presence. Audio-visual devices may also be used for recording the observations.

There are two types of observations which are :

14.2.2.1 Participant and Non-Participant Observations

Participant observation takes place when an observer participates with children and in the events being observed. Non-participant observation occurs when an observer observes events without interacting with the children being observed.

14.2.2.2 Structured and Unstructured Observations

Structured observation is a technique in which an observer observes events using a guide that has been planned in advance. Events are recorded according to the observation guide. The observer is not involved in the activities being observed, but records them as unnoticeably as possible.

Unstructured observation is a technique in which an observer observes and record behaviour in a holistic way without the use of pre-determined categories or guide. Everything that happens on the setting is recorded.

14.2.2.3 Advantages of the Observation Method

1. It provides direct information about behavior of individuals and groups.
2. It helps to gather data when the situation is real and not artificially set up.
3. It is possible to obtain information where laboratory experiments cannot be conducted.
4. It helps to develop a holistic perspective.

14.2.2.4 Disadvantages of the Observation Method

1. It is expensive and time-consuming

2. Selective perception of observer may distort data.
3. Investigator has little control over situation.
4. Behavior or set of behaviors observed may be a typical/not normal.
5. Results can change if the subject becomes aware they are being observed.
6. The observer may not be able to note all the behaviors that occur.

Factors to be kept in mind while observing

1. Note down the duration, date and place of observation and information about the subject.
2. Note as many details as possible by keeping notes about the children's behavior as well as context
3. Record behaviors as they occur
4. Do not write interpretations
5. Respect the children who are being observed
6. Do not disturb the activities of children who are being observed

14.3 INTERVIEW

It is a technique that simply uses direct conversation with children to gather data. One person (Interviewer) questions the other (Interviewee) on certain issues and then draws conclusions from these conversations. It is a detailed, in-depth conversation that is guided by certain objectives. The interview schedule is the list of questions used for interviewing. The face-to-face contact in interviews is useful in repeating, reframing and sometimes probing emotional issues. The interview can be audio-recorded or noted. Audio-recordings are more accurate and need to be transcribed. Transcription is the procedure of playing back the tape and writing out the responses. Every utterance is captured including all *uhms, ahs,* false starts and stutters, repetitions, distracting speech patterns ("you know", "like") and interviewer's remarks such as "right or yes". Also included are pauses, laughter, crying, interruptions, personal comments, external noises, in short: everything we hear!

The steps in constructing and conducting an interview are:

1. Decide on an issue that you want to study and look for a suitable title
2. List out the areas on this issue that are important to investigate
3. Write down the questions; word them carefully and simply
4. Arrange the identified questions from simple to more complex

5. Prepare an introductory passage for the respondent to explain your purpose
6. Try out the questions before conducting the final interview to ensure that the wording is valid. Try to use a conversational approach
7. Take some time to make the respondent feel comfortable in your presence. This is also called rapport-formation
8. Conduct the interview in a cordial manner
9. Thank the respondent and wind up the interview politely
10. Care should be taken to note the answers accurately. It is advisable in such cases to write out the detailed interview responses as soon as the interview is finished

The different types of interviews are:

14.3.1 Types of Interview

14.3.1.1 Structured: A structured interview involves the researcher asking the children a list of predetermined questions with a predefined set of answers about a carefully-selected topic.

14.3.1.2 Semi-structured: interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allow for focused, conversational, two-way communication. They can be used both to give and receive information. It contains a set of flexible questions that can be used as a guide.

14.3.1.3 Unstructured: An informal discussion that has no strict guidelines, allowing the discussion to be open and not necessarily concise in its nature.

14.3.2 Advantages of Interview

1. Interview is a powerful technique for studying in-depth issues.
2. Questions can be re-worded or repeated in case these are not understood correctly.
3. The interviewer and interviewee can proceed at their own speed.
4. Doubts can be clarified and further questioning can proceed in case the need arises.
5. It can be used with illiterate participants quite easily.

14.3.3 Disadvantages of Interview

1. Intensive training is required to conduct interviews.

Notes

2. Sometimes the face-to-face conversation can make children uncomfortable especially when the questions are intimate in nature.

3. Sometimes writing and recording can make children feel conscious.

Factors to be kept in mind while interviewing

1. Questions should be carefully constructed
2. The interview should not be too long
3. Care should be taken to establish rapport and to make children comfortable
4. The confidentiality of answers obtained during the interview must be maintained

INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.2

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. Watching a child for short duration after brief intervals is called — _____.
2. In a structured interview _____ can be free flowing to explore a theme.
3. Play behaviour of infants can be best studied by _____
4. The interviewee's privacy has to be respected by ensuring _____.
5. _____is good method for understanding feelings, emotions and values.

B. Put the terms given below in the related columns:

Participant and non-participant, real setting, interactions, semi-structured, face to face, event sampling

Observation	*Interview*

14.4 QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is a tool that uses questioning as a strategy to gather responses. It consists of a set of written questions which calls for responses on the part of individual(s) or the subject(s). It is a very concise, preplanned set

Notes

of questions to elicit information about the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes on a selected topic. The questionnaire may be self-administered or group-administered.

14.4.1 Types of Questionnaire

The questionnaire may be closed ended and open ended. Let us study about theses as follows:

14.4.1.1 Closed ended Questionnaire: It consists of a list of pre-decided questions with forced choices. The respondent is required to choose one of choices from the set of multiple options provided.

14.4.1.2 Open Ended Questionnaire: It consists of list of pre decided questions where there is a scope to provide descriptive and subjective responses.

14.4.2 Advantages of Questionnaire

1. Administering questionnaires involves low cost and is less time-consuming.
2. Information can be collected from a large number of individuals in a relatively short period of time
3. Each respondent receives the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way. Questionnaires may, therefore, yield data more comparable than information obtained through an interview.

14.4.3 Disadvantages of Questionnaire

1. It can only be conducted with literate respondents.
2. There is no scope to clarify meanings or explain the questions and the responses.
3. There is no scope for follow-up questions.
4. It has a low return rate i.e. the respondent may not return the filled in questionnaire.
5. There is a possibility that the respondent may not answer all the questions.

Factors to be kept in mind while preparing a questionnaire

1. Wording, sequence of questions and instructions have to be carefully prepared
2. Confidentiality must be ensured
3. Sufficient blank space must be provided in case of open ended questionnaire.
4. The questionnaire may be provided to the respondents in their local language.

Differences between Questionnaire and Interview

	Interview	*Questionnaire*
1	Takes place in face-to-face	Administered through a printed form
2	Except for infants and young children, can be used with everyone	Can only be used with literate persons
3	Time consuming	Less time consuming
4	Can be done with only a small number of people at a particular time	Can be administered to a large number of people at a particular time
5	The analyses of responses is complex	Relatively easy to analyse as the responses are received in predefined categories
6	The meaning of questions can be clarified to the interviewee in face-to-face situation.	The subjects make their own interpretation since the doubts cannot be clarified
7	Possible to have an in-depth understanding about the respondent	Limits the responses of the respondent since it close-ended
8	Only socially desirable responses may be obtained	Anonymity while answering the questionnaire allows respondents to be more honest
9.	Constructing an interview schedule is relatively easy	Construction of close-ended question is time consuming and complex

INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.3

State whether the following statements are true or false.

1. In an interview, the doubts and questions of the participants can be clarified.
2. Questionnaire is used to gather information from literate population.
3. Questionnaire is less time consuming.
4. In a structured interview, the sequence of the questions does not matter.

14.5 ART AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION

Artistic forms of expression such as role play and drawings can be used with

children to elicit their responses. These can serve as tools to gather meaningful data on children's behaviors and thought. Let us study more about these art forms:

14.5.1 Role Play

Role Play is a method in which different individuals assume a role, playing themselves or another person in a given situation or scenario, based on the objectives. It is a method for exploring the issues involved in complex social situations. Those involved in role-play are expected to "act out" the demands of the particular situation or role. For example, in role play, children play situations that may be acted out which may be reality-based or imaginary. The researcher may observe children playing roles of different characters or their responses to these characters in post-play discussion.

14.5.1.1 Advantages of Role Play

- It helps to gather different points of view and perspectives of children as displayed through the role play.
- It is useful to elicit responses including emotional responses in children.
- It aids to assess children's responses to problems and their solutions; skills of initiative, communication, self-awareness and cooperation.
- It facilitates identification of complex human interactions.

14.5.2 Drawings as Sources of Conversation

Children from a young age like to scribble with crayons. They may use particular colours or strokes on paper. The drawings may have no concrete shape or resemblance to reality. When teachers or mothers have asked children about what they have created, there is often a meaningful narrative. In recent years, researchers have made use of engaging children aged four to six years to respond to their own drawings. Drawings are analyzed on the basis of colour, intensity of strokes and their narratives.

14.6 REPORTING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

14.6.1 Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records are detailed description of important episodes which are written and maintained on a daily basis to record children's progress over a period of time. The anecdotal records provide important periodic information of children's lives. Records may encompass many aspects of children's development such as their behaviour, interaction, interests, likes, dislikes etc.

14.6.2 Portfolio

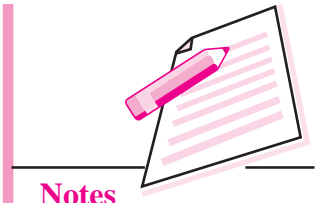
A portfolio is a collection of children's work which reflects their development and progress. It includes children's writing, drawings, art and craft work, activity sheets, photographs, videos, etc. It is an evidence of children's growth, development and learning providing a rich and comprehensive picture of a children's lives. Any form of drawing, writing and any other activity of the children can be assembled in the portfolio. It provides a comprehensive medium to assess growth and development of children in various domains. The collection also gives an opportunity to children to discuss their work, recall and remember special episodes or events and share it with others.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Specific techniques of systematically studying children, their behavior and thoughts viz..observation, interview,questionnaire, art and role play.
- Research design which a is framework or detailed procedures for carrying out the research systematically. These include Cross Sectional Research, Longitudinal Research, Experimental Design and case study.
- The characteristics of a good tool used for data collection.
- Anecdotal records are detailed description of important episodes which are written and maintained on a daily basis to record children's progress over a period of time. These provide important periodic information of children's lives.
- A portfolio is a collection of children's work which includes children's writing, drawings, art and craft work, activity sheets, photographs, videos, etc. It is an evidence of children's growth, development and learning. It provides a rich and comprehensive picture of a children's lives.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Discuss some of the issues and concerns that may be explored through a case study of a child.
2. How can different art forms be used to gather data on children?
3. Describe the usefulness of observation as a method to understand infant behaviour in the first six months.
4. Describe the differences between the interview method and the questionnaire.



5. List the points to be taken care of while conducting:
   - An interview
   - Observation
   - Questionnaire

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

14.1

(A) 1. True, 2. False, 3. False, 4. True, 5. True

(B) Cross sectional, Longitudinal, Experimental and Case Study

14.2

A: 1. Time sampling; 2. conversations; 3. observation;
4. confidentiality; 5. interview

B:

Observation	Interview
Participant and non-participant	semi-structured
Real setting	face-to-face
Event sampling	interactions

14.3

A. 1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. False

GLOSSARY

Biography: Life story

Contexts of development: Social influences and circumstances of individuals

Domains of development: Different areas of development and learning

Principles of development: Universal features for growth and development

Stages of development: Age-related periods of growth

Techniques of study: Different tools for studying behavior

Notes

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INTERNET SOURCES

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15

PROFILE OF AN ECCE CENTRE

Three-year-old Geeta enters an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Centre for the first time. She looks around and is attracted to the colours, textures, the well-arranged space, toys and the teacher. She finds the place interesting and feels happy about spending her days here. For the next three hours she plays and listens to stories. She also reads, learns new things, works with crayons and pastels. She has her meal with her new friends. At the end of the day, she returns home with a smile on her face and is eager to go back to the school the next day.

What qualities of the ECCE centre made Geeta feel happy at the end of the day?

An ECCE centre should be a place for joyful learning for children between the ages of three to eight years. Young children strive to make sense of the world in which they live. They try to organise the visual images and concrete objects in their environment into meaningful systems. For this to happen, children need a safe environment where they are encouraged to explore their surroundings and get rewarded for exploring. They need an environment that is rich in sensory stimulations and which provides opportunities for using their imagination and creativity.

In this lesson, we will try to find out what elements make an ECCE centre an inviting, stimulating and engaging learning place. This lesson is divided into four sections. The first section is on identification of location dealing with space management. The second section is on infrastructural facilities. The third section is on recruitment of ECCE personnel; types of ECCE staff, their recruitment, supervision and monitoring. The fourth section deals with mobilisation and utilisation of financial resources.

Notes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe essential features of ECCE centres;
- discuss location related issues of ECCE centres;
- list the infrastructure/ physical facilities to be considered while setting up ECCE centres;
- enlist the types of outdoor and indoor materials/equipment and teaching learning materials required at ECCE centres;
- state effective and efficient ways of maintaining and utilising the indoor and outdoor space and equipment;
- ensure safety and care of the child through mastery of skills for disaster management and first aid;
- select suitable equipment and materials for the centre;
- design layout plan for allocation of space for various activities; and
- list the various ECCE personnel and stakeholders.

15.1 IDENTIFICATION OF LOCATION

Since surroundings have such a powerful influence on pre-schoolers, there are few things you need to keep in mind when locating an ECCE centre/pre-school. The location of the centre should have:

a) Easy accessibility

b) Cleanliness and hygiene and pollution-free environment

c) Safety and security

d) Barrier-free environment for differently-abled children

Let us study in detail about these essential features of an ECCE Centre.

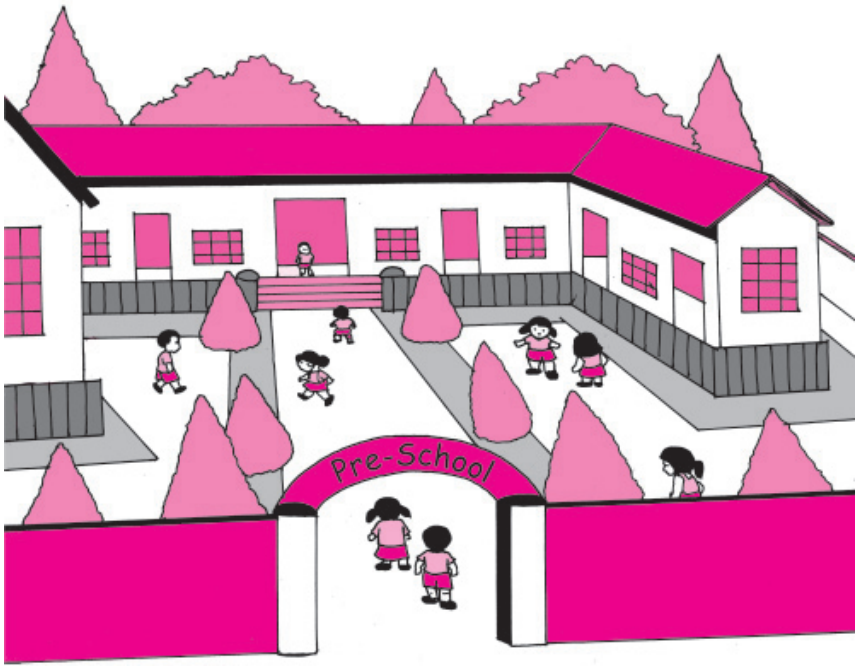


Fig. 15.1 An ECCE Centre/Preschool

(a) Easy Accessibility

Location is an important factor impacting the parent's choice of an ECCE centre/ pre-school. Young children are usually dropped to the centre by their mother or older siblings. Parents usually choose schools closest to their homes or working place so that it is covenient to drop and pick up the child everyday. An ECCE centre is best located adjacent to or co-located with schools or adjacent to parks or centrally located in the community.

(b) Cleanliness, Hygiene and Pollution Free Environment

Hygiene and cleanliness are fundamental issues when caring for young children. High standards in hygiene and cleanliness create a welcoming and safe environment for children to learn in. Young children are more vulnerable to infections. Dirty rooms and compounds can cause skin diseases and worm infections. Thus, the location of ECCE centre should always be away from the sources of infection like stagnant water pools, garbage dumps and open drains. The floor and toilets should be cleaned with disinfectant. The building should be made of standard quality construction methods and materials. This will help promote good indoor air quality.

Noise pollution can cause lack of concentration and headaches among children. It should be controlled through the use of sound absorbing materials like ceiling boards, rubber flooring and solid doors.

Heat, light and proper ventilation all have an impact on the development of children's health. To ensure the provision of adequate light and ventilation, an

ECCE centre needs well-planned ventilation. All windows, if possible, should have wire mesh to prevent entry of flies, mosquitoes and other insects.

(c) Safety and Security

Children are less prepared in responding to environmental hazards that may exist around them. Younger children are susceptible to injuries related to motor vehicles, fires and burns, drowning, falls and poisoning. Special attention should be paid to the safety and security needs of children in the environment through all stages of planning, programming and installation of the ECCE centre. In a safe environment, children can move about freely and explore without much supervision.

A safe environment includes:

- Developmentally appropriate equipment made up of non-toxic materials
- Non-slippery floors
- Stable shelves, objects and fixtures with rounded corners
- Walls rounded at the corners
- Safely located electricity fittings and plug points

(d) Barrier-Free Environment for Children with Disabilities

An ECCE centre of quality welcomes children with disabilities. To make the centre accessible for all children, the location of the centre and its infrastructure should be disable friendly. It should have ramps, where necessary, wide doors, toilets equipped with supporting bars, flexible furniture, planned traffic passages (routes) in and outside the centre.

Poor infrastructure, non-availability of appropriate furniture for children with disabilities, non-availability and poor quality of special aids and appliances are major challenges in ensuring an inclusive ECCE centre.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.1

Fill in the blanks:

(a) The ECCE centre can be made accessible for children with disabilities by making provisions like ..... and ..... .

(b) Dirty and unhygienic classrooms can cause ..... among ..... young children.

(c) ..... and ..... are some sources of infection.

(d) The floor should be..... for the safety of young children at the ECCE centre.

(e) Heat, light and proper ..... impact the child's health.

15.2 INFRASTURUCTURE/PHYSICAL FACILITIES

Physical facilities in an ECCE centre include both outdoor as well as indoor facilities. In this section, besides outdoor and indoor facilities, we shall also discuss the importance of water and toilet facilities in an ECCE centre.

15.2.1 Outdoor Facilities

Outdoor play is an integral part of the natural activity of children. The elements that make the outdoor space an engaging learning environment are sufficient space, opportunities to explore, use of imagination and creativty. Besides, it allows children to take risks within a safe and secure environment. Therefore, utilizing the available outdoor space to its maximum and maintaining it properly for safety and security of children becomes very important. The outdoor facilities include playground, sandpit, grass covered area,etc.

a) *Playgrounds:* All playgrounds should incorporate three kinds of areas, which can generally be categorised as open, quiet and active.

- Open area to run and play comprising of playground, lawn, concrete paths (for cycling) and shed. But if we do not have enough space in the centre premises, the teacher can take children to nearby park or open ground, whenever possible.
- There should be quiet areas also like areas of low vegetation, trees, landscaping, vegetable garden, sand area, etc.
- Active area includes swings, see-saw, jungle gyms, slides, rope ladders etc..for development of gross motor skills in children. Low cost/waste items like tyres can also be used to make swings. Provision for a small grass covered area to play could promote the health of children.

b) *Sandpit:* The sandpit is generally considered an important part of outside activity. Its size should be adequate for the number of children who will be using it at any one given time. The sand should be filled to a suitable depth, clean, washed and non-staining.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.2

State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) An ECCE centre should be welcoming to the children.

(b) Activities like running, jumping and swinging should not be planned if we do not have a playground.

(c) The sand in the sand pit should be clean and non-staining.

(d) We can use locally available low cost play materials for outdoor play.

(e) An inclusive centre ensures disabled friendly infrastructure.

15.2.2 Indoor Facilities

The indoor space, properly arranged plays a key role in supporting and developing children's learning and development. It should provide children with stimulation and challenge, and encourage their creativity and imagination. At the same time, it should also encourage independence and help children to develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Fig. 15.2 Indoor Facilities

Indoor facilities in an ECCE centre includes well lit ventilated rooms, storage space, safe floor covering, etc.

a) *Size:* The indoor space should be large enough to accommodate a desirable number of children. If the indoor space is too little to accommodate all children, they can be divided into groups and a few groups can be engaged in outdoor activities while the rest may be involved in indoor activities.

b) *Ventilation:* Good ventilation helps to keep the indoor environment comfortable and can contribute positively to children's learning. It can be provided through low-height windows, electric fans, exhaust fan etc.

c) *Lighting:* The quality and quantity of light influences the moods and feelings of children and their teacher. It can be enhanced through the use of lightshades

and proper placement of windows and ventilators. In the absence of adequate natural light, tube lights should be used. However, preference should be given to natural light.

d) *Storage space:* An ECCE centre should have enough storage space for toys, blocks, books, bags, teaching aids, equipment, music instruments etc. So, the indoor space should have deep almirahs and low shelves so that children can use them whenever they want.

e) *Floor covering:* The floor should be covered with mattresses if possible, to ensure children's safety. The use of natural material is advised for comfort. Surfaces should be of material that can easily be cleaned and maintained.

Fig. 15.3 Easy Access - Book Shelves

Fig. 15.4 Easy Access - Storage of Play Material

f) *Walls and roofs:* The walls may be either of bricks, mud, stone or cement but they should be safe, strong and durable. The roof can be made of cement, bamboo or banana leaves or any other locally available materials but it should be strong and safe.

g) *Water facility:* The problem of safe drinking water still exists in many centres which give rise to many water borne infectious diseases among children. So, availability of safe drinking water is a basic requirement in an ECCE centre/preschool.

h) *Toilet facility:* Many parents do not send their girl child to school because the school does not have separate toilet for girls. The centre should have separate toilets for boys and girls. Children's toilets must be of suitable size and height for the age group catered for. Wash basins and soaps/handwash must be at a level which is easily accessible to children.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.3

Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
(a) Ventilation	(i) Prevents water borne diseases
(b) Lighting	(ii) Strong and durable
(c) Walls and roof	(iii) Separate for boys and girls
(d) Toilet facility	(iv) Wide and low windows
(e) Safe drinking water	(v) More of natural light

15.2.3 Safety of an ECCE Centre: Disaster Management and First Aid Facility

Disaster planning or crisis management is about anticipating things that may go wrong, and ensuring safety of the children and staff and preventing avoidable damage.

Plans to set up an ECCE centre must include a map of effective procedures to manage emergency situations. ECCE centres should be equipped with arrangements such as fire extinguishers, sand buckets, provision for first-aid etc.

Management of disasters requires a dynamic, pre-planned process involving staff, children, parents and local community. By planning in advance and anticipating as many health and safety variables as possible, ECCE centres can ensure that decisions made on the day of a crisis are not only made quickly and effectively but that they will be correct and automatic responses arising out of the time spent on pre-planning for disaster.

Caregivers, teachers and other staff should be trained to deal with emergencies and disasters.There should be a suitably equipped first-aid box for children and arrangements to call medical assistance in an emergency.

15.3 EQUIPMENT AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Young children continuously grow and learn. With their imagination, they can transform a match box into a car, a twig into a tree or a piece of stone into an animal. They do not need expensive toys and equipment to learn. All they need is developmentally-appropriate play equipment and learning materials with appropriate guidance. It provides them the opportunity to understand themselves and the world in which they live.

Let us learn more about equipment and learning materials required for children in an ECCE centre.

15.3.1 Types of Equipment and Learning Materials

The equipment at the centre are broadly classified as indoor equipment and outdoor equipment.

(a) *Indoor Equipment and Learning Materials*: It consists of blocks, toy utensils and other materials for pretend play. It also includes puzzles, manipulative toys/games, materials for art activities etc.

(b) *Outdoor Equipment and Learning Materials*: It includes climbers, slides, swings, jungle-gym, see-saw, balls (variety of sizes and textures), sports equipment (child-size basket ball hoop, plastic bats, hockey sticks), wheel toys (wagons, push/ pull toys, wheelbarrows, scooters), riding toys (variety of sizes with and without pedals, for use by one or two children), tumbling mats, jump ropes, wooden twigs, sand boxes, sandpit, measuring cups/spoons, variety of containers/pails, plastic bottles, things that sinkor float, natural items such as shells, pieces of wood, rocks etc.

Fig. 15.5 Outdoor Play Area

15.3.2 Selection of Equipment and Learning Materials

It is through play that children learn. Hence, play material is also their learning material. Due consideration is necessary in choosing the right equipment and learning material for the centre. Often, funds allocated for play material are limited. So one needs to plan well on how to use the allocated money.

Some of the points to be kept in mind are:

- Will it retain children's interest over time?
- Is it age appropriate?
- Can it be used in a number of different ways and by different ages?
- Does it reflect diverse cultures and families?
- Can it be used by children of all abilities?
- Is it sturdy, well-designed and built to last?
- Is it safe?
- Does it meet current safety standards?
- Is it easy to keep clean and maintain?

Let us discuss some of the important considerations in detail:

- *Age-appropriateness:* All the learning materials and equipment should be relevant for the age group of the children for whom they are selected for promoting their language, cognitive and socio-emotional development.
- *Multiple Uses:* Children can use sand, water or play dough in a variety of ways, depending on their ability, past experience with the material and interest. So, while choosing equipment and learning materials, it should be ensured that the material has multipurpose use. For example, a wooden block can be used as seats in outdoor space for merry-go-rounds or even as slide by joining wooden stumps and planks. It gives children a sense of creativity and control over their play and learning.
- *Adequacy*: Since the curriculum includes indoor/outdoor, individual/group activities, so the learning materials and equipment should be adequate in terms of quantity and proportion to ensure access to all children for all types of activities planned in the curriculum.
- *Variety:* It is essential that there should be a large range and variety of equipment and materials in the centre to suit the needs, abilities and interests of all children. Materials that can be re-used and recycled like clay, blocks, buttons, empty plastic container, empty cartons etc are a good choice.
- *Safety:* Equipment should be appropriate and safe to use by children. They should be of low height and light with smooth edges/finishes. Finishes and dyes should be non-toxic and meet all safety standards.
- *Diversity and Flexibility:* It is important to ensure that the equipment in an ECCE centre reflects the community in which it is located. All the materials and equipment should be selected with consideration to encourage

acceptance of diversity such as race, culture etc. The materials must also be easily adaptable for facilitating learning in different development areas.

- *Natural Material*: A large range of natural materials can be used at the ECCE centre like pebbles, seed pods, sand, water, leaves and twigs, or plants. This would also avoid large expenditure on buying expensive equipment and toys. For example, inexpensive material like rope can be used to make swings, ladders or hammocks.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.4

1. State whether the following statements are true or false:

   (a) Leaf-plates cannot be used for serving meals.

   (b) Use of materials like clay, blocks, pebbles etc. adds variety in the play.

   (c) Safety and durability are the two major considerations while choosing materials and equipment for an ECCE centre.

   (d) Play materials of outdoor play cannot be made accessible for children with disabilities.

2. Give two examples of procuring equipment for an ECCE centre on a low budget.

3. Classify the following as indoor or outdoor equipment and materials: sand pit, swings, fit-in puzzles, dolls, riding toys, collage materials, jungle-gym, xylophones, radio and blocks.

15.3.3 Allocation of Equipment and Materials

Merely procuring the equipment and learning materials for the centre does not ensure a joyful learning environment. They are selected and purchased with the main purpose to give opportunities to children to explore and manipulate them. They are not meant for display, demonstrations or decoration. For optimal hands-on learning to take place, equipment and materials must be arranged so that children have direct access to them. This visibility and accessibility ensures that children see the available choices and reach out to them.

In this section, we will discuss some of the ways of appropriate allocation of equipment and materials at the ECCE centre to make it an interesting place promoting individual and small group experiences.

- If the centre is big enough, try to divide it into different activity areas like: art and craft area, science and sensory area, block and puzzles area, music and movement area, cooking area etc and then locate the materials according to the requirement of the specific areas. Define area boundaries with low shelves, blackboard or furniture.

- Consider the types of activities that go well together. Active, noisy play should happen away from quiet and focused activities. Wet, messy play activities need to be grouped around a sink. All the materials should be organized and grouped together in a specific area so that children can find, use and return materials independently.
- The equipment and materials need to be clearly visible and accessible. This can be done through storage at accessible heights (at or below 3 ft from ground level) and proper labeling (pictures and words) of materials.

Fig. 15.6 Arrangement of an ECCE centre

- Create well marked pathways so that children can move easily from one area of the room to another without disturbing others. The materials should be arranged in such a way that it should facilitate easy transition from one activity to another.
- Place equipment in such a way that it allows teachers to supervise the work of individual children. Special consideration may be made for children with special needs. Enough space should be provided in the classroom so that a child with locomotor disability can move the wheelchair and can have easy access to materials.

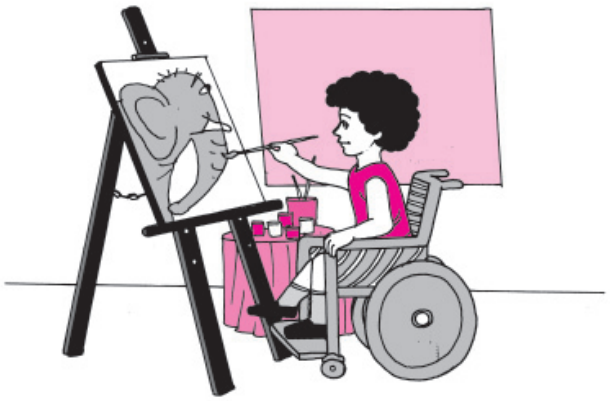


Fig.15.7 Catering to Children with Special Needs

- Outdoor space, however, can be used in multiple ways like art and dramatic play, sand and water activities etc. Hence, equipment and materials can be located accordingly.
- Provide a large floor space for group activities.
- Children's art should be displayed on walls attractively at their eye level.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.5

1. Fill in theblanks:

   a) .....and ..... of learning materials is necessary to ensure that children see their choices and can easily reach them.

   b) .....or ..... can be used to define boundaries of activity areas.

   c) .....and ..... are the activity areas which can be organized in the outdoor space.

   d) Shelves should be labeled with ..... and ..... to make the materials easily accessible.

15.3.4 Space Management

Space management is an important consideration in the running of an ECCE Centre. Good planning is essential for the smooth running of the centre. The arrangement of space should be such that there is sufficient space for all essential activities. All activity areas should be so located that the children are able to move freely from one activity area to another without unduly disturbing others. Besides, activity areas should be divided in such a manner that children in one area are not distracted by those in other areas. Well-organised space promotes desired behaviours and facilitates positive interaction between the children and staff. It also helps in the proper location of required learning materials.

15.3.5 Maintenance and Utilisation of Equipment and Learning Materials

It is essential to ensure that equipments are well maintained and in working order. The first step in this direction is regular inspection of the classroom, equipment and materials ensuring their long life. Teachers sometimes get discouraged about using materials that require intricate handling/assembling because of the time and energy involved in their maintenance. There are simple maintenance strategies which if used consistently make the job easier and also promote a sense of ownership and pride in the child. Some are discussed below:

- Dusting, cleaning and sterilising all equipment should be done regularly to avoid the spread of germs.
- Toys made of washable material should be washed and kept clean at all times to prevent spread of disease producing germs.
- Enough storage space is necessary to maintain cleanliness as well as for easy access of the materials at the time of use. Space to store children's personal belongings is also essential.
- All storage containers and shelves must be labeled with pictures or words. While the initial set up of a labeling system is time-consuming, once in place, it helps children and the staff to put back the materials in their designated places. It also encourages independence and ownership among children.
- Organise storage of small items like beads, crayons, picture cards etc in labelled tubs or baskets for easy clean-up.
- Try to place areas requiring clean up in close proximity to a water source with available cleaning materials.
- Materials that have not been used for a long time may be rotated frequently and new things added to sustain the interest of children.
- All electrical fittings and heating appliances should be out of the reach of children. They need to be checked regularly and repaired immediately to avoid any accident.

The Quality Standards for ECCE has been approved by the Government of India in 2013-14. Let us study the provisions mentioned in the document.

The following non-negotiables must be made available to all children attending any kind of ECCE provision:

- Duration of the ECCE programme should be three to four hours
- One classroom measuring 35 square meters for a group of 30 children and availability of 30 square meters of outdoor space for a group of 30 children
- The building should be structurally safe and within easy approach. It should be clean and should have surrounding green area
- Clean drinking water should be available
- Separate toilets for girls and boys should be available
- Immediate health service in terms of First Aid/ Medical Kit should be available at the centre. It should be checked regularly against a check-list and anything that has been used, must be replaced immediately. The expiry, if any, must be checked.

- Adequate trained staff should be appointed
- There should be provision of adequate developmentally appropriate toys and learning materials
- Space should be allocated for cooking meals and nap time for children.
- The adult-child ratio should be 1:20 for three to six year old children and 1:10 for children under three years.

Source: Quality Standards for ECCE 2012, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

15.4 RECRUITMENT OF ECCE PERSONNEL

Well-trained and qualified ECCE personnel are essential for facilitating and providing optimal learning opportunities to children. Selecting and recruiting well qualified and skilled ECCE personnel is an important aspect for quality early childhood education.

In this section, you will learn about different types of ECCE personnel and their recruitment process.

15.4.1 Types of ECCE Personnel

Usually an ECCE centre is headed by a centre head with teachers and helpers sharing the responsibility. Let us study about them in brief.

ECCE Teacher: The ECCE teacher is the key person who is responsible for conducting activities and programmes in a classroom setting. A skilled and passionate teacher plays an important role in the lives of young children. The teacher needs to have sound theoretical knowledge and be able to apply this in practical ways when interacting with young children. A teacher should have the ability to embrace many roles depending on the needs and demand of children like communicator, facilitator, model, storyteller etc. She/he should be spontaneous with and sensitive to children's needs.

ECCE Helper: ECCE helper provides care and supervision to children under the guidance of the teacher. The helper helps and supports the teacher in conducting different activities as planned. The helpers are invaluable in a centre setting and invaluable to the ECCE teacher they work with.

Few supporting staff such as a sweeper, maid and peon are also required to keep the centre premises neat, clean and organised.

15.4.2 Adequacy of Staff

Dealing with young children requires immense energy and dedication. So, before starting an ECCE centre the number of staff required to maintain a desirable child-teacher ratio must be decided. A small classroom of 10 to 15 children may have one teacher and one helper.

Fig. 15.8 Desirable Child-Teacher Ratio

15.4.3 Monitoring and Supervision of Staff

To ensure that the centre's staff and resources are effectively managed, regular supervision and monitoring are required. This includes proper deployment of ECCE personnel, supervision of daily programme of centre's activities and events. It also helps in staff appraisals and in identifying in-service training needs.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.6

1. Fill in the blanks:

   (a) .....maintains ECCE centre premises neat and clean.

   (b) An ECCE/preschool teacher needs lot of.....and.....to deal with children.

   (c) Regular supervision and monitoring are required for the effective management of.....and..... .

15.4.4 Criteria for Selection of Staff

Working with preschoolers requires certain skills and competencies. As early childhood is an important period, we need to employ personnel who areaccordinglyskilledandcompetent.Eventhegovernmentandtherelated ministries have laid down some important and mandatory skills and qualification as important for preschool teachers. Hence, the ECCE personnel employed must comply with the prescribed norms and qualifications. It must be ensured that they have received the prescribed education and training from institutes/universities/boards of repute and are duly recognised by competent authorities.

The ECCE teacher ought to be someone from the local community so that she/he is aware of the social values and customs of that community and would be able to inculcate the same in children and satisfy the expectation of children, parents and community at large.

Professional Experience: Persons who are not trained can be provided with the necessary orientation in the initial stages and frequent refresher courses can also be organized for them.

While any person can have a degree in childhood development or one or two years of training in ECCE, ensuring that the person has experience working with children is entirely different. Hence, the real world experience is a must. Anyone can study about children but working with them is a whole new experience. Through professional experience, an ECCE teacher gains the skills needed to work effectively with young children.

The teacher/personnel must know how to:

- Promote child development and learning by creating learning environments based on a deep understanding of children's needs and development.
- Build relationships with family and community that support and involve them in children's education.
- Systematically employ observation, documentation and assessment to positively influence children's development and learning.
- Promote learning and development by integrating knowledge of relationships with children and families; a wide array of effective educational approaches; content knowledge in each area of young children's learning; and how to plan and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- ECCE personnel with pleasant personality are suitable for working with young children. They need to have patience and a sense of responsibility, enthusiasm, creativity, sensitivity and spontaneity. The staff should be child-friendly. While it is hard to determine a person's personality in just one interview, making use of the listed personal references can help tremendously. Background checks are a 'must' for anyone who will be working around children. A background check will ensure that the person has a clean record and has not been involved in any crime in the past.

Hiring ECCE personnel is an important part of planning and maintaining a healthy, safe and successful ECCE centre.

15.5 STAKEHOLDERS IN ECCE

Stakeholders refers to any group that is affected by the working and policies of an organization. A stakeholder in education is anyone who is concerned and interested in the success of a school or school system. This includes government officials, school board members, administrators, and teachers. Parents and students

Notes

are also stakeholders, as is the community as a whole. The involvement of stakeholders in early childhood development is vital.

There are four categories of stakeholders. *Users; those governing and managing it; influencers are those who decide what and how that is to be done; providers are people who provide resources to the project. They support quality, care and services. They provide their promotion, advocacy, and funding efforts.* Let us look at each of them in brief.

1. Users

Users are those who will use the products of the project or a programme. They are the beneficiaries of the output. For example, in an ECCE programme, the users are children and their parents.

2. Governance stakeholders

Auditors, regulators, health and safety executives are some examples of people who can be categorised as governance stakeholders. They are people who have an interest in how things are managed in the programme.

3. Influencers

The rules, regulation, policies of the government and specific needs of the family and community among others, influence what they need for their children. They are people who have the ability to change the programme being run by the preschool.

4. Providers

It is evident that it is the school which provides the structured facilities for promoting learning and development of children. Providers include the management, staff and anyone else contributing to the services that benefit children.

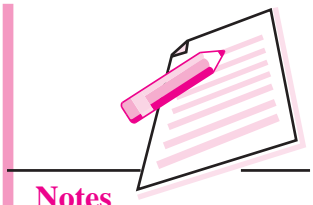
For children, a sense of community plays an important role in the development of their feelings of belonging and security. For many families, early childhood settings often provide their first contact with a wider community beyond the home. The community, therefore, is an important stakeholder in ECCE.

All ECCE centres must ensure and plan to enhance the stakeholders' participation in the running the centre. They must regularly formulate guidelines to be followed by all the providers.

A good ECCE centre includes in the teachers' work schedules time to work with parents. The teachers should be trained on how to work with parents and appreciate the need to work in collaboration. The parents need to be informed about the importance of their involvement and contributions. The teachers must keep parents informed about curriculum and how they can assist at home.

Stakeholders' participation is therefore vital in the early stages of children's education because of the impact it has on later education results.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT



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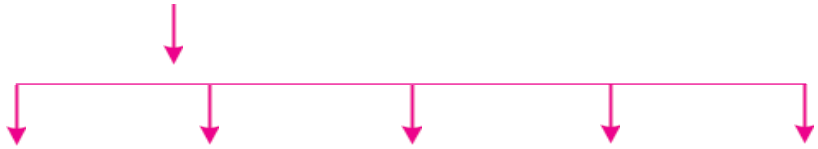
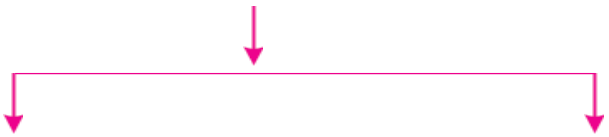
In this lesson, you have learnt that :

- Identification of location



- Infrastructure and physical facilities



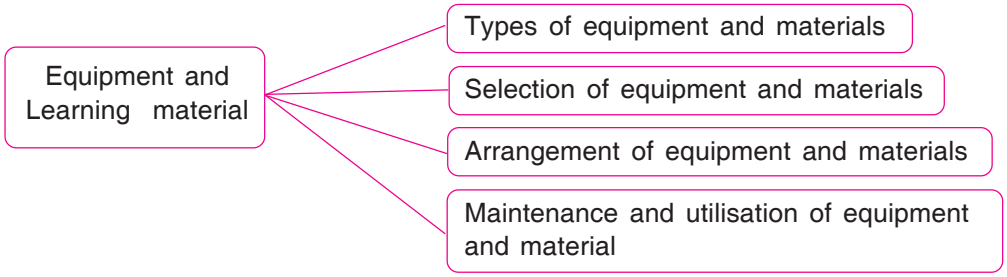
Indoor

- — Size
- — Ventilation
- — Light
- — Storage space
- — Walls and roof
- — Toilet facility

Outdoor

- — Size
- — Playground
- — Sandpit
- — Grass covered area
- — Ramps, wide doors etc,

- Safety and security
  - — Use of non-toxic materials
  - — Non slippery floors
  - — Stable furniture with rounded edges
  - — Rounded corner walls
  - — Safe location of electrical fittings and plug points
  - — Equipment and know how for disaster management


Equipment and Learning material
Types of equipment and materials
Selection of equipment and materials
Arrangement of equipment and materials
Maintenance and utilisation of equipment and material

— Trained person to handle medical emergencies and provide first aid

- Types of ECCE personnel
  - ECCE teacher/preschool teacher
  - ECCE helper
  - Support staff
- Adequacy of staff
- Monitoring and supervision of staff
- Criteria for selection of ECCE staff
  - Educational qualifications
  - Experience
  - personality
- Stakeholders in ECCE
  - Users
  - Governance
  - Influencers
  - Providers

1. Explain the factors to be considered while selecting the location for an ECCE centre.
2. Describe some of the ways to maintain and utilise the indoor space to support child's learning and development.
3. Discuss the outdoor facilities required at an ECCE centre and how they can be maintained and used efficiently?
4. Describe the factors affecting the selection of materials and equipments for ECCE centre.
5. How can one ensure ease of visibility, access and use of these materials by children in an ECCE Centre ?
6. State the ways to maintain the equipments and materials in a proper condition at ECCE centre..
7. Briefly discuss the various stakeholders in ECCE.

15.1

(a) Ramps and flexible furniture

Notes

(b) Skin diseases and worm infections

(c) Stagnant water and garbage dumps near the centre

(d) Non-slippery

(e) Ventilation

15.2

(a) True (b) False (c) True (d) True (e) True

15.3

(a) iv (b) v (c) ii (d) iii (e) i

15.4

1. (a) False (b) True (c) True (d) False
2. Two ways of procuring materials on a low budget are:
   (i) Use of natural materials like leaf, wooden twigs etc.
   (ii) Use of available resources in multiple ways
3. Indoor materials : fit-in puzzles,dolls,collage materials,xylophones,radio and blocks.

Outdoor materials : sand pit, swings, riding toys, jungle-gym

15.5

1. (a) Visibility and accessibility
   (b) Blackboard and lower shelves
   (c) Gardening area, sand pit area
   (d) words and pictures
2. Two ways of arranging equipments and materials for inclusive classrooms are:
   (i) Leaving enough space for movement of wheel chairs.
   (ii) Using low height tables and chairs.

15.6

1. (a) ECCE helper

Notes

(b) energy and attention

(c) staff and resources

2. (i) The teacher has more time to devote to each child

(ii) Managing the group requires less time.

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Notes

16

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF AN ECCE CENTRE

Any organization needs to be managed and administered well to be successful. Even your home runs smoothly because of good planning and administration. If you analyse the working mechanism, you will find that, like any other organization, the home has a well-defined management and administration mechanism. Efficient and correct administration is both an art and a science.

Good management helps to maintain a unity of directions and actions that are being carried out in the organization. These help the organization achieve organizational goals and requirements effectively and efficiently. Good management and administration ensure the planning and arrangement of all factors of production being carried out in the organization. It also helps to assemble and organize resources in an effective manner to achieve set goals. It gives direction to the efforts of all involved towards achievement of predetermined goals.

An ECCE centre also requires good administration and management to achieve its goal of providing the required learning environment that will promote and ensure the holistic development of children. All the stakeholders need to work in an organized and coordinated manner for the ECCE centre to be successful.

In this lesson, we will discuss administration and management and also about the difference between supervision, monitoring and mentoring and their role in running an ECCE centre. This lesson will also discuss the importance of keeping record and the types of records to be maintained in an ECCE centre. The process of accounting and auditing of finances of an ECCE centre will also be discussed.

Notes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain administration and management in the context of an ECCE centre;
- describe the role of supervision, mentoring and monitoring in ECCE Centre;
- explain the need and importance of maintaining records;
- identify the different types of records maintained at ECCE centre;
- discuss ways of mobilisation and utilisation of resources; and
- explain the importance of accounting and social auditing.

16.1 MEANING OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

An ECCE centre, like any other organization or enterprise, requires proper administration and good management, if it is to be successful and achieve the desired goals. Let us first understand what these two terms mean.

16.1.1 Meaning of Administration

Administration is the process of running an organization. It is the controlling act of managing activities of an organization. It encompasses:

- Creating rules and regulations to run the centre
- Making decisions, as and when required, in the interest of the stakeholders and self
- Managing varied operations being carried on therein
- Choosing required staff
- Directing the activities of various units to achieve set goals and ensuring efficient performance
- Connecting links between senior management and employees

16.1.2 Meaning of Management

Management refers to the organization and coordination of all activities being carried out in the enterprise in order to achieve its objectives. The coordination encompasses activities like creating policies and organizing, planning, controlling and directing the organization's resources to achieve the objectives of policy of

the organization. It also includes allocating resources to accomplish the desired goals. Management also includes planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling the various activities of the centre. Good management helps to motivate all to work towards the common goals of the ECCE centre.

16.2 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF AN ECCE CENTRE

The early childhood centre administrator is responsible for the overall operation of the centre and services being provided by it. Depending on the size of the centre and number of employees working in the centre, the roles and responsibilities of early childhood administrators may vary. The responsibilities of the administrator are diverse, ranging from complete responsibility for programme operations to shared responsibilities of specific operations or programs by other employees.

In an ECCE centre, it is invariably the manager who looks after the management of the organization, where as the administrator is responsible for the administration of the centre. Management focuses on managing people and their work, while administration focuses on making the best possible utilization of the organization's resources.

Both administration and management are concerned with the basic functions of planning, organising and controlling. In organizations, there are typically three levels of management:

- Top level comprising of the owners of the centre
- Middle level comprising of Centre Head and assistants
- First level comprising the ECCE staff/teachers

Management styles can be categorized as Autocratic, Democratic, or Laissez-Faire, with Autocratic being the most controlling and Laissez-Faire being the least controlling.

A preschool's management is typically responsible for:

- the direction and supervision of the work of all staff ;
- recruitment, induction, training, development and performance management of staff;
- overall safety and well-being of the children in their care;
- setting policies and procedures for the service and ensuring their implementation;
- ensuring compliance with the ChildCare (PreSchool Services) Regulations and all other relevant legislation;

Notes

- management of the finances of the service and reporting the same to the committee/board of management.

The main administrative post in a school is that of Principal/ Centre Head. The Head is assisted by a deputy principal or assistant, depending on the size of the centre. The management authority is the school board of management, generally comprising of owners/patron's nominees, the principal, teacher representatives, parent representatives and co-opted members of the community.

ECCE center staffing varies. It is based on:

- the size of the center
- the number and needs of the children attending
- any additional services provided by the center

Day-to-day management and supervision are provided by a Principal/Centre Head. Employees of an ECCE centre comprises of:

- A principal/Centre Head , providing day-to-day management and supervision
- ECCE staff includes head teachers, assistant teachers and teacher aides.
- Other employees may include accounting and human resource staff, maintenance workers, food workers and transportation staff.

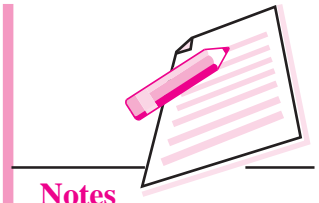
INTEXT QUESTIONS 16.1

State whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The early childhood centre administrator is responsible for the overall operation of their centre and services.
2. Good administration ensures efficient performance of all departments of the organization.
3. The administrator can alone give direction and supervise the work of all staff .
4. The responsibilities of the administrator are very diverse.
5. Laissez-Faire is the most controlling management style.

16.3 SUPERVISION, MENTORING AND MONITORING IN CONTEXT OF AN ECCE CENTRE

All children have a right to equal access to learning so that their capabilities are fully developed. It is important that all staff recognise the capabilities of the children and seek advice and support whenever needed to help them reach their potential. Supervision, mentoring and monitoring are the important components for sustaining and improving the quality of services provided in an ECCE centre.



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Recognising the importance of monitoring and supervision of ECCE centers, the National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013 recommended strengthening of this aspect of ECCE programmes. This mandates that it be based on a systematic Monitoring Framework with easy-to-measure input, output and outcome indicators specified for ECCE quality.

The Head of the ECCE centre has to perform the role of supervisor, mentor and monitor. S/he has to act as a friend, guide and supervisor of staff and be the role model as a mentor. He checks overall and individual progress, identifies the problems and advises on solutions as a monitor.

16.3.1 Supervision

Supervision is essentially the practice of monitoring the performance of ECCE centre staff, noting the merits and demerits and using suitable techniques to improve the shortcomings. It is an interaction between two or more persons with a combination or integration of processes, procedures and conditions. It has also been described as a process of stimulating growth and a means of helping teachers to achieve excellence in teaching.

Benefits of Supervision

- Supervision provides opportunity for learning in case there are any gaps in the knowledge or skills of the service provider.
- Supervision helps in understanding ground realities and challenges, and a good supervisor can suggest or provide means to overcome the problems.
- Supervision motivates the ECCE teacher to perform well.
- Supervision helps in building the team.
- Supervision also helps in making the teacher aware of new guidelines and notices.
- Supervision helps the teacher relate better to the community.

The purpose or reasons for supervision are:

- Checking on the availability of teaching-learning materials;
- Advising on the appropriateness of the teaching-learning materials in use;
- Advising on the school environment;
- Promoting curriculum change and innovation;
- Providing feedback on teacher performance;
- Identifying needs for staff development;
- Conducting quality assurance checks;

Notes

- Ensuring teacher motivation and morale; and
- Providing professional support and guidance to the teacher.

16.3.2 Monitoring

Monitoring is very important in planning and implementation. Monitoring is about supervising activities in progress to ensure that they are on course and on schedule in meeting the objectives. Monitoring is the continuous review of programme implementation to identify and solve problems so that activities can be implemented correctly and effectively. It involves regular collection and analysis of information/ data on aspects of the programme's activities.

Monitoring provides useful information for:

- Analysing the programme;
- Determining whether the inputs are well utilised;
- Identifying problems faced and finding solutions;
- Ensuring all activities are carried out properly and in time;

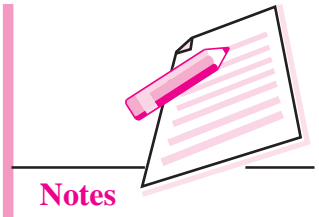
A critical factor in high quality ECCE settings is ongoing supervision and monitoring the success of the programme. As children grow and develop or there is a change in the group of children in the community, the programme needs to be adapted to match this change. Therefore, ECCE programmes need to monitor the changing needs of children, their families and communities, as well as new information they gain through monitoring both the children and the programme.

16.3.3 Mentoring

Very often supervision and mentoring are used synonymously, but they are different. Mentoring is a partnership of mutual benefits between the mentor (teacher/caregiver) and children. This is based upon encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to share. The role of a mentor in an ECCE centre is to encourage exploration of ideas, provide appropriate and timely assistance to children in identifying and solving problems. The teacher or caregiver who acts as a mentor helps children to broaden their perspective, always seek and give, and be receptive to feedback.

The following are the functions of the mentor:

- Helps the mentee about a specific issue;
- Coaches the mentee on a particular skill;
- Facilitates the mentee's growth by sharing resources and networks;
- Challenges the mentee to move beyond his or her comfort zone;
- Creates a safe learning environment for taking risks; and
- Focuses on the mentee's total development.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 16.2

Match column A with column B

Column A	*Column B*
(a) Supervision	(i) mentor
(b) Monitoring	(ii) partnership of mutual benefits
(c) Mentoring	(iii) mentee's total development
(d) Teacher	(iv) continuous review of programme
(e) Mentor focuses on	(v) regular collection and analysis of information

16.4 NEED AND IMPOTANCE OF RECORDS AND TYPES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED AT ECCE CENTRE

Records are the documented information generated, collected or received in the starting, conduct or completion of an activity. They comprise sufficient content, context and structure to provide proof or evidence of the activity. Specifically, school record are a unified, comprehensive collection of documentation concerning all services provided to children. This may include intake information, assessment(s), all secure information regarding children, etc.

It is critical to keep record to refine strategies because records can help you spot gaps and suggest improvements. Keeping record will also make it easier to construct formal and informal reports on the progress of children.

All children develop and communicate in a different way. To plan effectively for all children, it is necessary that staff document and keep records. These help them to get further understanding of children's thinking, ideas, interests and pattern of learning. Records provide the basis for planning to support and encourage the child. Record keeping and the storage of information are important function of both the administration and teaching staff of a school.

School records include those pertaining to:

- personal details of child, along with those of their academic performance; assessments and examination results;
- school policies;
- minutes of school-based meetings including information received from the Department of Education (DE) and other education bodies, solicitors, press organizations and public bodies.

Some common record types available in schools include:

- Pupil Progress Reports
- School Roll Books
- Admission Registers
- Pupil Record Folders
- School Work Experience Forms
- Staff Record
- Financial Records
- Miscellaneous Records

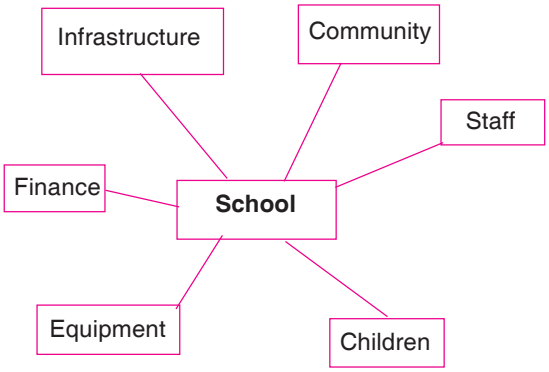


Fig. 16.1 Focal Points of Records

Records at ECCE centres can also be used to:

- build a picture of each individual child
- monitor individual's progress in all areas of development and be used to plan for the children's future progress
- highlight the difference between what we expect the children to learn and what they actually learn
- communicate with family, caretakers and other ECCE professionals
- help evaluate provisions and planning
- provide for continuity from the centre to the next class or formal school
- demonstrate accountability since records can be used to explain and justify the work done
- avoid incidence of fraud, overspending and financial waste by keeping record of financial transactions, and
- constitute points of reference of fostering good relationship between school and parents especially through records such as visitor's book and parent-teachers' association record.

16.4.1 Types of Records

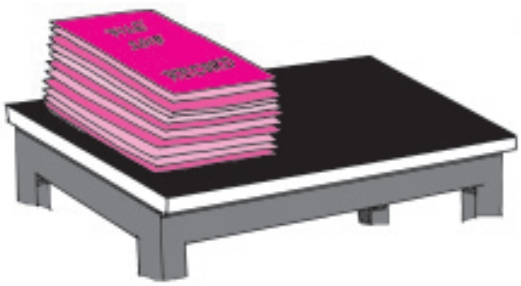


Fig. 16.2 Records maintained at the ECCE centre/preschool

Records can be broadly classified as:

1) Children's Record
2) ECCE Workers/Staff Record
3) Stock Record
4) Financial Record
5) Miscellaneous Records

1. Children's Records

Children's records include:

a. Child's Profile
b. Attendance Register
c. Progress Report
d. Child's Portfolio

Let us read about these detail

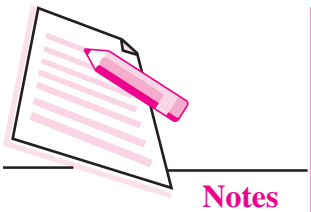
a) Child's Profile/ Cumaulative Record

A child's profile / cumulative record is usually compiled with the help of parents at the time of admission to a centre. It should contain:	
(i) Name of the child	(ii) Date of Birth
(iii) Sex	(iv) Position in the family
(v) Number of siblings	(vi) Name of Father
(vii) Qualification of Father	(viii) Occupation of Father
(ix) Address/contact number	(x) Name of the Mother
(xi) Qualification of Mother	(xii) Occupation of Mother
(xiii) Immunisation status	
(xiv) Allergies (if any)	(xv) Specific need of the child
(xvi) Any other relevant information	

Sample: Child's Cumulative Record

b) A daily attendance register of all the children enrolled at the ECCE centre is to be maintained. In case, a child is continuously absent for a few days, the ECCE staff should visit the child's home to find out the reason.

c) Checklists are used to record developmental achievements. For example, to



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map children's involvement in activities, checklists can be used as they are quick and easy to fill in.

d) Portfolio or records of achievements in the compilation of selected example of children'sworkdatedandcollectedoveraperiodoftime.Thisprovidesevidence of progress. This also becomes a source of pride for parents as well as for children.

e) Regular written detailed observations of individual children enable the teacher to see the child as a whole, rather than as a list of skills or behaviour achieved in any particular domain of development.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 16.3

(a) List the broad classification of records maintained in an ECCE centre.

2. ECCE Worker/Staff Record

Individual records of all ECCE staff/employee of the centre must be maintained. These must include the staff member's name, address, contact number, age, nationality, marital status, details of all relevant qualifications and experience, date of joining, job description, salaries, and references.

Each ECCE staff/employee should have access to her/his records when needed. Supervision and training records of the staff and volunteers should be recorded and updated regularly. Attendance register with time sheet must be maintained.

Staff Attendance Register

	April 2016 →			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
S. No.	**Name of the staff** ↓	Time	Sign																															
1	Staff 1	M																																
		A																																
2	Staff 2	M																																
		A																																
3	Staff 3	M																																
		A																																
4	Staff 4	M																																
		A																																
5																																		
6																																		

Sample Staff Attendance Record

3. Stock Records

These are records of all resources and materials stocked at the centre. They show the quantity and kinds of materials at the centre's disposal. The materials can be divided into: equipment for outdoor and indoor space, furniture etc. The quantity of learning materials (story and rhyme books, blocks, puzzles, crayons, paper etc.) in storage as well as the amount used should be regularly updated.

4. Financial Records

Finances are essential for carrying out centre activities. Like other resources, finances require strict regulation and management. Financial records need to be maintained for auditing and reporting purposes. Funding agencies and parents who make financial contributions to the centre like to know how their contributions are being used. By keeping financial records the centre is able to make this information available whenever needed.

Financial records at ECCE centre include cash book, ledger and balance sheet. Let us read about these in detail.

A cashbook is a record of small value purchases before they are later transferred to the ledger and final accounts. It is maintained by a staff of the centre. All records of minor day-to-day expenditures are maintained in a cashbook.

Cash Book				
Month, Date and Year	Voucher No.	Particulars	Amount (in Rupees)	Total (in Rupees)
March 19, 2016	1	Stationery	400	400
	2	Cleaning materials	50	50
	3	Ration for meal	200	200

Sample Cash Book

A **ledger** is the principal book or computer file for recording and totaling economic transactions taken place at ECCE centre. It has separate columns for debits and credits, and a beginning monetary balance and ending monetary balance for each account.

A **balance sheet** lists all of the assets that an ECCE centre owned as well as the debts owned by it. Assets are listed separately, first and then liabilities are listed together. The assets are grouped into two different categories: current assets and long-term assets.

The current assets represent all the assets that an ECCE centre expects to be used or converted to cash within the next year. Long term assets are those assets that you don't plan on converting to cash within the next year such as land, building and equipment. Long-term liabilities refer to those obligations that won't be paid off within a year, such as loan. This is very helpful to know the financialstatusofanECCEcentre.ItisimportantthatallECCEprovidersknow how to use, analyse and read this document.

Balance Sheet (in thousands)

	April 1, 2018	March 31, 2019
Cash	173	183
Other current assets (furniture, stationery)	176	196
Long-term assets (building,land)	231	227
Total Assets	**580**	**606**

Current liabilities (stationery, salary of staff, day to day expenditure) Long term liabilities(repair of building, furniture)	250328	265321
Total liabilities	**578**	**586**

Sample Balance Sheet

Besides this, basic book keeping of income, expenditure, transactions, fees taken from parents/guardians for individual children, records of bank deposit and withdrawals, bills received and payments made, records of donations and fundraising receipts need to be maintained on a day-to-day basis by the administrator.

5. Miscellaneous Records

There are some miscellaneous records which also needed to be maintained are:

- A record of regular inspection for safety equipment must be kept in a book retained solely for this purpose
- Menu records for mid-day meal must be kept ,if applicable
- Logbooks
- School/preschool/centre prospectus
- Documents relating to the foundation of the centre: trust deeds, building accounts, lists of subscribers to building fund etc
- Photographs of the centre and its activities (identified if possible)
- Newspaper cuttings and scrapbooks relating to the centre and its activities
- Plans of centre buildings
- Time tables and records relating to the curriculum
- Minutes and records of the centre Parent Teacher Association or friends organisation
- Visitor's book

16.4.2 Management of Records

Records regarding day-to day activities which are on separate papers/sheets should be compiled in a file, and all the files must be organised and stored duly labelled/ coded in an orderly way to ensure easy retrieval.

All the files should be labelled (coding) like 'Children's Daily Work file, Receipts and Bills file' etc. They should be arranged subject-wise and kept in a cabinet

Notes

drawer preferably under lock and key. The cabinet drawers in which the files are stored must also be labelled.

All records should be created in such a way that they provide all the information regarding the particular activity in a clear way to the person accessing it. All the data should be regularly updated in a neat and organised manner.

16.5 MOBILISATION AND UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

After you have determined the feasibility of opening an ECCE centre in a given location, you will need to think about how to finance the construction or renovation of your centre (if it is your own building) or to finance the rent if it is rented centre. In this section, we will discuss the various sources/ ways of raising finance for ECCE centre, their management of finance, the correct utilization/allocation of fund and the importance of accounting and auditing.

16.5.1 Raising Finances

All enterprises require funds to run successfully. With growing demands and rising expenses we need to explore avenues to raise finances to meet these growing demands. We can easily get support from the government and community, as they are important stakeholders in the children's well-being and success in life. One can approach the concerned ministries (e.g., Ministry of Women and Child Development) and departments (e.g., Social Welfare Board) for financial support. One can search the Internet for such schemes of financial support to preschools and apply for the same if eligible. The financial support requested could be partial or full.

Some ways to raise fund for the ECCE centre are:

I. Grant-in-aid from the Government

Besides the annual grant given by the Government for ECCE centre, mini-grants can be requested by the ECCE owner, for additions like to build or update playground equipment or to develop learning materials. These mini-grants are useful, but may not be able to meet the total financial help needed. The available schemes of financial support can be accessed on the sites of the various ministries and departments associated with child welfare and development.

II. Community Involvement

The centre could organize various activities and events to involve the community to sensitise it to the needs of the centre and motivate the members and parents to help and contribute as per their capacity. Some of the popular methods of community involvement for raising finances are:

(ii) Fair/Functions

ECCE workers can organise fair or cultural functions at the centre. The centre could display and sell articles made by children or parents/community members. The visitors can be asked to buy these articles priced to include some profit to help raise funds.

(ii) Volunteerism

"A penny saved is a penny earned". One can save money not only through sale of materials but if skilled parents or community people can also help by providing voluntary services for ECCE centre. They can teach in the classes or they can contribute in preparing learning materials for children. For example, all parents can make toys like dolls, visual charts, blocks with small boxes etc. They can also prepare small articles for sale in fairs or exhibitions organized by the centre and save money.

(iii) Renting Out the Space

As ECCE centre's maximum working hours are till 1:00 p.m. So, after this the indoor space can also be rented for other purposes like running dance class or art and craft classes etc. If there is enough outdoor space, it can be used for growing fruits and vegetables, which can be sold to generate funds.

(iv) Organise Materials and Stationery Donation Camp

Many people may not be able to donate in cash but they can help by donating in kind. They can donate old toys, clothes, vehicles, used containers or any other object which can be used by children of the centre. They can also donate learning materials like puzzles, crayons, blocks etc. The staff can organize camps for collecting such donations for three or four days. The centre may inform the community about the camp through home visit or pamphlets or announcement. The centre can ask the community/parents to donate grains/ food stuff which can be used for mid-day meals.

(v) Donations

The ECCE staff can ask parents for donations. The parents could donate as per their capacity. If an ECCE centre islocated in an urban area, a fixed fee can be charged from all parents for providing services to their children. Some extra donations may be collected from families and other donors.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 16.4

1. List some methods to raise finances for setting up an ECCE centre.

Notes

16.6 Accounting and Auditing

The main objective of auditing is to enable the ECCE staff to form an opinion on the accuracy of the financial statements prepared by them for a given period. Auditing also helps them to improve the centre's accounting system. The secondary objective of auditing is to detect or prevent errors. Auditing, therefore, enhances staff skills in financial management and evaluates performance.

The funding agencies issue financial regulations from time to time whereby audited accounts of a given financial period must be submitted to facilitate financial decisions, for example, allocation of grants.

At the end of each financial year or budget period the Centre Head has a statutory responsibility to prepare and present to the funding bodies an audited financial report. This should give a true view of the financial position of the centre. Therefore, it must be done with reasonable care and skill.

Auditing is of two types:

- Internal Auditing
- External Auditing

Internal auditing is intended to ensure regular and frequent checking on a centre's financial transactions and records. It also serves to check whether all financial transactions have taken place according to budget, to set procedures following management policies.The focus of external auditing is to establish the truth and fairness of the accounts. It gives added credibility to unaudited financial statements and records of the centre's financial transactions. It confirms their compliance to the statutes.

16.6.1 Importance of Accounting and Social Auditing

Accounting and social auditing is the process of communicating the social and environmental effects of organizations' economic actions, to particular interest groups within society and to society at large. This can help an organisation to investigate its performance against social, environmental and economic objectives, and ensure that it is working in accordance with its values. Social accounting may be defined as identification and recording of business activities regarding social responsibility. Social responsibility concept is the one of the important concept of management. Social accounting is very important tool to measure the performance of any company in view of social responsibility.

Objectives of Social Accounting

The main objective of social accounting is effective utilization of resources. The others are to:

- Provide you with an ongoing record of how your ECCE centre has developed and changed overtime;

- Receiving feedback on how things are going;
- Identify the areas where things are working well and not so well;
- Know how well the aims and objectives are achieved; and
- Collect information you can use when applying for grants and funding, for reporting on grants, and for promoting what you do.

16.6.2 Management and Utilisation of Funds

Financial management at ECCE centre deals with procurement and allocation of funds. It also deals with monitoring their use that is, whether funds are used for the purposes for which they were meant. A financial plan is essential for effective and efficient utilisation of funds. It helps you in evaluating your present financial status and in setting goals for running of the centre. It also provides evidence of funding sources indicating that you have researched and planned the future financial management of your centre.

Preparing a budget is the first step of financial planning for the centre. The budget helps in forecasting the expenditures and estimating the revenues like, where the money will come from for the targeted expenditure. After doing this, you will get an idea of the financing gap or the difference between income and expenditure that you are up against. Accordingly, you can adjust your income and expenditure figures. Either you can set priorities to cut your expenditures or can identify more sources of funds. Budgeting also provides scope for financial adjustments in case of change of priorities or emergencies. Based on your budget, you can establish a plan of action over a specific period of time.

All financial transactions need to be recorded promptly and accurately. Monthly review of expenses and income should be conducted. If possible, external auditing of the centre's financial records should be done annually. All staff should take the lead in demanding and enforcing proper financial management of the centre's fund.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 16.5

Fill in the blanks:

(a) ..... also helps them to improve the centre's accounting system.

(b) Financial management deals with procurement and ..... of funds.

(c) Preparing a..... is the first step of financial planning for the centre.

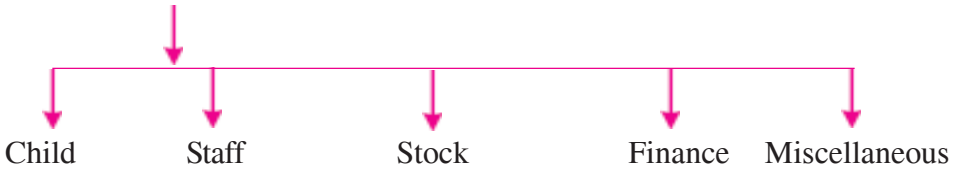
(d) The focus of..... is on establishing the truth and fairness of the accounts.

Notes

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

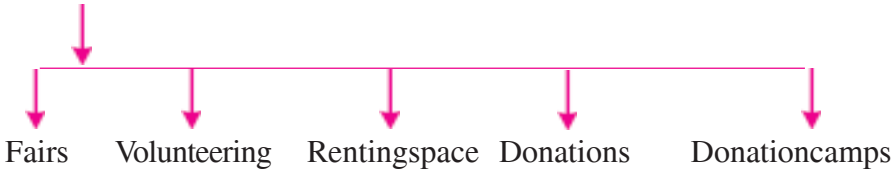
- Meaning of administration and management
  - Meaning of administration
  - Meaning of administration
- Administration and management in the context of an ECCE centre
- Supervision, monitoring and mentoring an ECCE centre
- Supervision → Purpose, Benefits
- Monitoring → Purpose, Benefits
- Mentoring → Purpose, Benefits
- School Records → Need and Importance, Types
- Types of Records



- Children's records
  - Child's profile
  - Attendance register
  - Child's portflio
  - Progress report
- Staff record
  - Staff profile

Notes

  - Attendance register
- Centre's records
  - Financial records
  - Stock registers
- Cashbook
- Ledger
- Balancesheet
- How to raise funds for an ECCE centre → Government; Community/public
- Government → Grants; Loans
- Community



- Accounting and Auditing → Internal auditing; External auditing
- Importance of accounting and social auditing
- Objectives of social auditing
- Management and utilization of funds

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Discuss the importance of supervision, mentoring and monitoring in management of an ECCE centre.
2. Explain different types of records with examples that need to be maintained at ECCE centre.
3. Differentiate between cashbook, ledger and balance sheet.
4. What is a budget? What are the advantages of the budgeting?

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5. Explain the importance of accounting and social auditing.
6. Briefly describe management and utilization of funds in context of ECCE.

ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

16.1

1. True.
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. False

16.2

(a) iv

(b) v

(c) ii

(d) i

(e) iii

16.3

Records can be broadly classified as:

1) Children's records
2) ECCE workers/Staff records
3) Stock records
4) Financial records
5) Miscellaneous records

16.4

Grant-in-aid from the government, fair/functions, volunteerism, renting out the space, organise materials and stationery donation camp, donations.

16.5

(a) auditing

(b) allocation

(c) budget

(d) external auditing

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17

QUALITIES AND ROLES OF AN ECCE TEACHER

We all know that early childhood is the most important period in children's lives. The influence of this period lasts and affects the whole life of a human being. If children receive utmost care with ample learning opportunities during this phase, they may later develop into healthy and happy human beings. After the home, an ECCE centre is a place where children are nurtured to attain abilities in different domains like physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language competencies. ECCE teachers at the centre own the responsibility of providing positive inputs to children for their holistic development. Thus, in the process of early childhood development and learning, good quality teachers are indispensable.

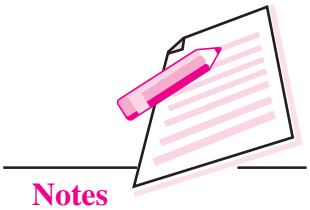
LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the qualities of an effective ECCE teacher;
- discuss the roles and responsibilities of an ECCE teacher;
- describe the skills required for enriching children's learning environment; and

17.1 QUALITIES OF AN ECCE TEACHER

To ensure quality ECCE, the quality of teachers involved in providing early care and education becomes essential. Teachers need to possess certain qualities to create a conducive and child friendly environment for young children.



Teachers play a significant role in realizing the objectives of the ECCE programme.

Let us study the key qualities of ECCE teachers. These are not only desirable but indispensible.

Froebel, the Father of Kindergarten, said:

I understand it thus. She (the mother) says, "I bring my child–take care of it, as I would do"; or do with my child what is right to do, or "do it better than I am able to do it". A silent agreement is made between the parents and you, the teacher; the child is passed from hand to hand, from heart to heart. What else can you do but be a mother to the little one, for the hour, morning or day when you have the sacred charge of a young soul? In hope and trust the child is brought to you, and you have to show yourself worthy of the confidence which is placed in your skill, your experience and your knowledge.

Source:Early Childhood Education Today,-George.S.Morrison-p-619

An ECCE teacher is:

Loving and Caring

Children need love, care and affection to open up and get along with others. As children enter a new space of ECCE centre, they need an affectionate teacher on whom they can rely for their needs. Unconditional love and care helps in developing a sense of trust between children and the teachers. This also helps in children's sound social and emotional development. Teacher's concern and care for different needs of the children pave the way for forming an everlasting bond with them. This further helps in solving classroom problems with mutual understanding and belief. A sense of belongingness is developed in children enabling them to build more trustworthy relationships with others in future. Thus, being caring and loving are one of the most important qualities ECCE teachers are expected to possess.

Energetic, Enthusiastic and Motivated

Teachers full of positive energy energise the classroom and children. Joyful teachers have the potential to create an atmosphere which is enjoyed by all children. Play leads to healthy development of children and enables them to learn and explore a variety of things around them. Motivated teachers mingle well with children in various activities which leads to children and teachers constructing ideas together and learning together. Such teachers experience inner satisfaction and happiness while working with children.

Notes

An Active and Empathetic Listener

It is a known fact that to understand and feel the problems or situation of another person, one has to put oneself in that person's shoes. This is called 'empathy'. This fact is equally true in children-teacher relationships. To understand and feel children's pleasure and pain, teachers have to be active and empathetic listeners. Children have different ways of expressing their emotions and responding to situations. Empathetic teachers have the ability feel to recognize children's thoughts and emotions. This helps in making children understand their place in the teacher's life. This quality also helps teachers in solving many classroom and behavioural problems.

Cheerful and Committed

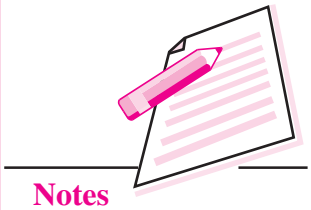
Did you ever encounter a teacher in your school who used to be annoyed, angry and always displeased with the children? Did you like that teacher ? You probably did not. The personality of teachers directly influences children. Teachers with positive personality create a positive emotional environment. Such teachers receive cooperation and positive responses from children. These teachers respect their profession and are happy working with children.

Patient and Persistent

Teachers must have patience and persistence to address the needs of children. Teachers may find that during play and other activities, children might misplace toys or play material, mess up the classroom and dirty themselves. They may not respond and learn things in the manner in which teachers have anticipated. In these circumstances, teachers need not get upset or angry at children. Rather providing freedom to the children to play and explore the way they like, keeping in mind their safety concerns, encourage children to learn better. Similarly, one child might require the same thing to be repeated several times while the other may require very special attention in some other way. To address different needs, ECCE teachers have to be patient and persistently strive for positive outcomes.

Flexible and Adjusting

Teachers have to manage a classroom full of children with diverse needs and potentials. Planning to cater to these needs is a vital component of an ECCE programme. Teachers may not necessarily have all the resources and conditions adequate for effectively planning and implementing the activities. Teachers who are flexible and adjusting may help in bringing out positive outcomes from adverse circumstances. This also aids in smooth functioning of the centre as it is not bound to rigid rules. Thus, teachers must keep a flexible and adjusting approach while planning and designing learning experiences for young children.



Creative and Innovative

Children are curious. They want to explore the environment around them and find reasons for various phenomena. They imagine things in their own ways. They can find novel answers to possible questions and can construct things which are new in their own innovative ways. There is a need to nurture these unique ways of thinking and learning in children from the very beginning to help them bloom to the fullest. Children need to be provided with opportunities to experiment and innovate.

Hence, creative and innovative teachers are a must if the objectives of ECCE are to be attained.

Organized

ECCE teachers have to accomplish many things such as organizing the classroom, creating teaching learning materials, designing bulletin boards, conducting parent teacher meetings etc. So, being organized is another quality which they should possess in order to conduct activities smoothly.

Effective Communicator

Communication skills of teachers are significant as they need to communicate effectively with children, parents, the principal and the community. These skills are important for teachers as they are required to engage children in various activities and sustain their interest. Teachers have to express their ideas in a very clear and simple manner so as to connect with young children. They are also required to use appropriate gestures, postures, voice modulation, etc. while conducting activities for children such as storytelling, rhyming and role playing.

Good communication skills help them to build a rapport with parents and other stakeholders to support children's holistic development.

Effective in Building Rapport with Parents and Community

Home and ECCE centres are two important places where young children grow, develop and learn. Positive attitude of teachers towards the role of parents in their children's care and education is essential. Regular communication between parents and teachers help in understanding children's needs and their developmental stages. Also, active participation of parents and community members in the functioning of the centre reduces the gap between the two environments. Thus, building rapport with parents and community members is essential for optimum development of children.

Notes

Self-Confidence and High Self-Esteem

Self-confidence and high self-esteem are significant qualities of ECCE teachers. They must display these qualities in order to create a healthy and positive environment in the classroom.

Well Trained

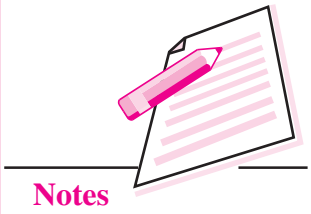
ECCE teachers are required to possess essential knowledge and skills to effectively deal with young children. In order to make learning experiences meaningful for children, teachers must understand the significance of the early years of life and quality ECCE. To cater to the physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive and language needs of children, teachers must have a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of growth and development. Understanding diversity and practising inclusion is essential for ECCE teachers to provide children with equal learning opportunities, experiences and exposure irrespective of their varied differences. ECCE teachers are required to support children with disabilities, socio-economic disadvantaged children or children who become victims of natural calamity, violence or war by understanding their developmental characteristics and learning needs.

They must be well trained in teaching skills and in teaching. This requires them to understand how young children learn, and the teaching methodologies. Thus, knowledge of a variety of teaching learning approaches like learning through play, activity-based learning, learning by doing/hands-on learning, discovery learning, cooperative learning, discussions, field visits are highly essential and add to the quality of ECCE teachers.

Research Skills and Lifelong Learner

To make the ECCE programme effective, teachers also need to engage in research. This enables them to solve immediate problems faced in the classrooms, revisit their teaching methodology and improve upon the teaching learning process.

Striving for continuous improvement in knowledge and skills to meet the needs and demands of the early childhood profession is another key quality of ECCE teachers. Teachers are required to keep themselves abreast of new knowledge and developments in the field of education and ECCE in particular.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 17.1

1. Identify the qualities of ECCE teachers in the given grid.

c	c	t	p	q	s	m	b	b	l	y
o	r	g	a	n	i	s	e	d	o	o
n	i	n	n	o	v	a	t	i	v	e
f	e	m	p	a	t	h	e	t	i	c
i	m	s	a	c	x	z	i	l	n	a
d	p	s	t	r	b	c	i	l	g	r
e	t	t	i	e	d	k	n	p	c	i
n	l	q	e	a	c	t	i	v	e	n
t	c	p	n	t	h	f	d	c	j	g
f	c	l	t	i	n	m	c	x	k	f
n	k	m		v	o	n	z	z	z	m
0	j	f	l	e	x	i	b	l	e	b

2. Fill in the blanks.
   1. Teachers have to manage a classroom full of children with diverse ……and……..
   2. Teachers are required to keep themselves abreast of new ……and……in the field of education.
   3. Regular communication between parents and teachers help in understanding children's …….and their ……stages.
   4. Teachers must be ……. while planning and designing learning experiences for young children.
   5. Children have different ways of expressing their ……and responding to situations.
   6. An unconditional……. and care helps in developing a sense of ……between children and the teachers.

17.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ECCE TEACHERS

ECCE teachers play a major role in supporting the overall development of children. They have multiple and dynamic roles as they own the responsibility of taking care of various aspects of young children's lives such as their health, nutrition, safety, protection and education.

Notes

Let us study some of the roles and responsibilities of ECCE teachers.

Ensuring Safety and Security of Children

Children need to be physically and emotionally safe. An ECCE teacher must ensure that the ECCE centre is a safe place for them to move freely. They need to be continuously observed and supervised.

It is also required to create an emotionally safe and positive environment full of praise, encouragement and support in the classroom so that children feel comfortable and happy within their surroundings.

Planning Activities

Planning is one of the most important roles of ECCE teachers. It is required at every phase of delivering a quality ECCE programme. They are required to plan a number of activities including curriculum, time table, age appropriate indoor and outdoor learning activities, assessment procedures, parent teachers meeting, workshops etc. Teachers have to plan keeping in mind children and their requirements; societal needs and expectations; availability of resources and feasibility. Thus, thoughtful and systematic planning is essential and helps in attaining the desired outcomes.

Designing and implementing ECCE Curriculum

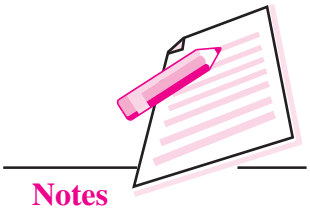
This is one of the most important roles of ECCE teachers. Teachers understand the needs and developmental levels of children. Hence, they should actively contribute in designing the curriculum which encompasses all the experiences provided to children.

A well designed curriculum can only be successful if teachers are trained in delivering and implementing it in the right manner.

Creating an Enriching Teaching Learning Environment

Each child has an individual learning style and pace of learning. One teaching approach might not be effective for all children. ECCE teachers own the responsibility of creating a supportive and nurturing environment for young children. There are various aspects which together contribute to conducive learning environment at the ECCE centre. Let us study the role of teachers with respect to these aspects.

- ECCE teachers need to organize and manage classrooms. This requires them to allocate the space for different activities, select age appropriate equipment and learning material and organise classroom space to cater to the requirements of children with disabilities. Safety and security of children are also to be ensured by the teacher.
- ECCE teachers have to use a variety of teaching learning material to make learning interesting and meaningful. It is the teacherss' responsibility to procure appropriate teaching learning material. They may also create the learning material using locally available low-cost and no-cost materials as per the need. They are required to innovatively use and recycle material.



For example, they may use empty cartons for making pencil/pen stand, bird feeder, toy bus, house etc. Similarly, waste plastic bottles may be used for making rockets, pen stand, etc. Teachers should also provide waste materials to children to manipulate and create something. This helps development of creativity and imagination in children. In addition, the material found in the natural environment like pebbles, dry leaves and twings also attract children and they prefer to play with them.

Teachers have to be innovative in using teaching learning material in multiple ways, for example they may use pebbles for teaching the concept of rough and smooth surface, counting, addition, subtraction, playing etc.

- Organise age-and developmentally appropriate, engaging and interesting learning experiences. All children should be provided with ample opportunities to play, observe, manipulate, interact, explore and experiment. Activities to cater to different development domains must be organised by the teachers. For example, they may organise role play for socio-emotional and language development, visit to a nearby park for physical-motor development etc.
- Teachers have the responsibility to ensure that every child in the classroom feels respected, accepted and welcomed. To address the existing diversity in the classroom, teachers are required to organise the learning process in such a manner that all children get an opportunity to participate and express themselves. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their development and learning.
- Teachers are reponsible for conducting regular assessment to identify patterns of growth and development in children, monitor their progress, provide them support and create an enabling environment. This may be done through observation, making anecdotal records and portfolios.

Organising Programmes and Events

- Scheduling and organising Parent Teacher Meetings (PTM) is another important responsibility of ECCE teachers. Both parents and teachers should aim for overall development of children. Thus, through these meetings they can work collaboratively to promote children's learning and development.
- Children need to be given varied exposure for their sound development. ECCE teachers are required to organise special talks/interaction for children on topics significant and related to their day to day life, for example the importance of safe drinking water, saving water and electricity, planting trees, healthy food and body, protecting animals etc. They also expected to celebrate special days and ensure active participation of children in these events.
- ECCE teachers are required to conduct orientation programmes and workshops for parents and community members as well.

Notes

INTEXT QUESTIONS 17.2

Fill in the blanks.

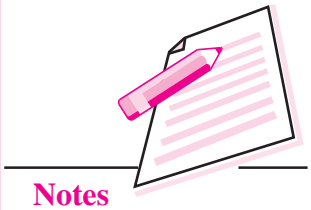
1. ECCE teachers should use ……..low-cost and no-cost material.
2. Ample opportunities should be provided to children for their ……..... .....development.
3. Teachers may creatively ….....…. and .....…..material in an innovative manner.
4. ……...……and ….....…….planning is essential and helps in attaining the desired outcomes.
5. Teachers should actively contribute in designing the……
6. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their ……...……and…...…….

ACTIVITY 17.1

Talk to an ECCE teacher and list out the role she/he performs.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Scheduling and organisingparent-teacher meetings
- Organising special talks/interaction for children on topics significant and related to their day-to-day life, conducting orientation programmes and workshops for parents and community members.
- Ensuring that every child in the classroom feels respected, accepted and welcomed; address the existing diversity in the classroom. Children with disabilities must be provided the required support in their development and learning.
- Organising age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, engaging and interesting learning experiences. All children should be provided with ample opportunities to play, observe, manipulate, interact, explore and experiment.
- Using a variety of teaching learning material to make learning interesting and meaningful. Create the learning material using locally available low-cost and no-cost materials, creatively use and recycle material in an innovative manner using teaching learning material in multiple ways.
- Organise and manage classrooms: Allocate the space for different activities, select age- appropriate equipment and learning materials and organise classroom space.



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- Design and successfully implement ECCE Curriculum.
- Provide an emotionally safe and positive environment full of praise, encouragement and support for children to feel comfortable and happy.
- Planning a number of activities including curriculum, time table, age-appropriate indoor and outdoor learning activities, assessment procedures, parent teachers meeting, workshops etc.
- Conduct regular assessment.

QUALITIES

- Loving and caring
- Creative and innovative
- Patient and persistent
- An active and empathetic listener
- Energetic, enthusiastic and motivated
- Cheerful and committed
- Flexible and adjusting
- Organised
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- An effective communicator
- Effective in building rapport with parents and community
- Research skills and lifelong learner

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Briefly explain the roles and responsibilities of ECCE teachers.
2. Discuss the qualities of ECCE teachers.
3. How can ECCE teachers create an enriched learning environment for children?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

17.1

1.

c	c	t	p	q	s	m	b	b	l	y
o	r	g	a	n	i	s	e	d	o	o
n	i	n	n	o	v	a	t	i	v	e

Notes

f	e	m	p	a	t	h	e	t	i	c
i	m	s	a	c	x	z	i	l	n	a
d	p	s	t	r	b	c	i	l	g	r
e	t	t	i	e	d	k	n	p	c	i
n	l	q	e	a	c	t	i	v	e	n
t	c	p	n	t	h	f	d	c	j	g
f	c	l	t	i	n	m	c	x	k	f
n	k	m		v	o	n	z	z	z	m
0	j	f	l	e	x	i	b	l	e	b

2.

1. needs, potential 2. knowledge, developments 3. needs, developmental 4. flexible 5. emotions 6. love, trust

17.2

1. locally available 2. holistic 3. use, recycle 4. thoughtful, systematic 5. curriculum 6. development, learning

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Notes

18

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Learning and development are continuous through life, and especially in young children. Development of young children takes place in different atmospheres such as at home where they are surrounded by their parents, grandparents and other family members. The formal, friendly atmosphere of the community, and the first ladder of learning i.e. ECCE centre or preschool are also important learning theatres for them. Whatever might be the settings, parents play a very important role during these early years of children's lives. A well-coordinated quality partnership between the school and the parents and good communication between both during ECCE and early primary years is very important.

"There is a notable consensus across the education policy statements and practice guidelines in many countries that parents are children's first and most enduring educators." (source : OECD, 2012).We need to remember that young children are dependent on their parents and families, and it is the family who is the young child's first educator. In fact, the mother is considered to be the first teacher. Thus, parents have a lasting influence in the development of young children's thinking process, feelings, attitudes and ideas. A positive link must be established between the preschool and the home. Quality partnership system also provides support for expected learning outcomes by our young children which in turn help in smooth transition from preschool to primary classes. In short, supportive parents and understanding teachers can contribute to the growth and development of children.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the importance of parents and community involvement in ECCE programme;

Notes

- discuss contributions of parents and community in the functioning of an ECCE centre;
- identify the benefits of parent-teacher involvement; and
- describe activities that can be organised for active participation of parents and community.

18.1 THE NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS IN ECCE

It is not only the parents but other family and community members who share the responsibility of caregiving. Looking after the well-being of children is equally important at home, as compared to the preschool. What do we mean by involving or working with the family? Let us now understand what we mean by parental or family involvement.

18.1.1 Defining Parent Involvement

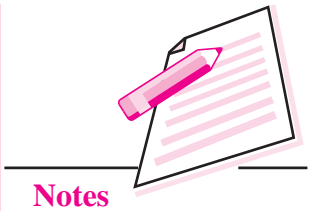
In ECCE, we talk about two very important components. The first one is 'parents are supporters in their children's early education and care'. The second is parents are active partners in their children's early learning. Involvement of parents in ECCE could be seen as when parents participate in the early education, growth and development of their children from birth. They are the primary source of influence in their children's lives. The early years of a child's life are the impressionable years. Whatever is said or done to them by caregivers is deeply embedded in them for life. It would become very difficult or rather, impossible, to change their attitude in later years. Therefore, the parent's involvement at the right age is very important.

In order to understand the meaning of parental involvement, we need to understand the following:

i. Helping parents to establish a stress-free, harmonious home environment that help children flourish freely and learn without fear.

ii. Encouraging parents to volunteer and help during cultural programmes in the preschool or accompany the children during a theme-based or project-related excursion where additional adult supervision is required.

iii. Keeping the communication channels open between home and preschool and encouraging exchanges of children's activities. This two-way communication is essential for children's overall development as it helps to know the children better. For example, how a child is learning phonics; why a child is having problem in relating with other children; why a child has a fear to climb on slides; why a child is a reluctant reader but enjoys



writing, and so on. Talking with teachers provides information to the families about how to help their children at home by engaging them in various activities in a play-way manner.

iv. Finally, involving community means identifying the resources from the community and then utilising the same to strengthen the preschool programme, family practices and young children's learning. For example, providing the relevant information to parents; taking support from village Sarpanch for making provision of space for cultural programme of an ECCE centre; creating awareness for sending children regularly and timely to the ECCE centre; taking help of a community doctor to develop health awareness among family members and so on.

Parental involvement in a quality ECCE programme helps the community members understand that a child deserves to live in a healthy and happy family environment. Bonding between teacher and parents is critical in strengthening the school and community environments which ultimately enables teachers and parents to encourage their children's educational process. In a quality ECCE programme, the families take part in programme planning and monitoring and therefore, they are not only recipients of information but are full partners in the implementation of the ECCE programme.

All the above can be achieved through parental education, training and family support programmes.

18.1.2 Why We Need Parents and Community Awareness

In practical terms, the quality partnership means the preschool teachers and staff need to respect the knowledge and understanding that parents have of their children. Parents should acknowledge that preschool teachers know about their children and their development. Children can only benefit when each partner talks and listens to the other.

The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013 recognises that young children are best cared for in their family environment and thus strengthening family capabilities to care for and protect the child will receive the highest priority. A major deterrent to ensuring the right kind of ECCE is the lack of understanding of developmentally appropriate ECCE programme among the parents and other stakeholders. In order to address this deficit, extensive use of media will be made, including folk, print and electronic media, to reach out to parents, caregivers, professionals and the larger community and create awareness of the appropriate kind of ECCE.

Parents of poor families or those belonging to low–income families do not find Early Childhood Education (ECE) necessary for children between the ages of

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three and six years, for whom it is mainly intended. Most parents who send their children to ECCE centres or preschools have altogether different ideas about the purpose and implications of ECE. For example, the parents whose children are going to an *Anganwadi* think it is a place for getting supplementary nutrition. Then, there are such parents who think that they would get some free time for themselves and thus, they send their children to preschool. Yet, some parents send their children for formal learning of reading, writing and mathematics. Such parents also pressurise the preschool teachers to do more formal teaching that involves rote learning. The purpose and objective of a high quality preschool is not to teach for formal learning for reading, writing and number work but help young children learn through developmentally appropriate practices/ activities informally.

Children develop in the warmth of their families and communities that are characterised by diversity in family composition, languages spoken, their own religious belief systems and cultural practices. Families serve as the primary context for their children's development. Therefore, preschools and *Anganwadis* comprise a vital context that in turn impacts children's development through quality care and early education as provided in the centres. Resources from parents and the community are essential for creating an emotionally supportive environment in which children develop optimally. We need to understand that communities that adequately support parenting as well as early childhood education at the right time, contribute significantly to the quality of life of all people in the community. This allows everyone in the community to grow and develop socially and economically. Therefore, it becomes important for preschool and primary teachers to guide and educate the community in general and parents in particular and to bring about awareness of the advantages of quality early childhood care and education.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 18.1

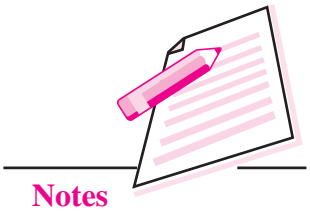
State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Children can only benefit when each partner-parents, teacher and community talk and listen to each other.

(b) Parents of high income families do not find ECE necessary for three to six year old children.

(c) Most parents who send their children to ECCE centres have different ideas about the purpose and importance of early childhood education.

(d) It is not important for preschool and primary teachers to guide and educate the community and parents.



(e) The National Policy on ECCE (2013) recognises that young children are best cared for in their family environment.

18.2 ROLE OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY IN FUNCTIONING OF AN ECCE CENTRE (PARTNERSHIP)

A lot has already been discussed about the role and importance of parents in ECCE programme. Parents need to be involved as partners in their children's education. As we discussed, parents know how their children behave at home, learn at home, bond with their extended family, and other significant people. The culture, health, behaviour and other issues related to each individual child are certain points on which parents can give information to teachers. Family members are a source of information to the preschool teacher. For example, what are the child's previous experiences and how is the child doing presently? What are parent's observations of ongoing development of their child? When teachers have knowledge about the needs and background of all her/his children in preschool, it becomes easier to provide ECCE programme in a more organised manner.

It is the preschool teachers' duty to involve the family members as per as advocates for their children's development and learning. Parents are very supportive when they communicate openly and honestly with the school staff about issues and concerns. Effective partnerships with family and community are characterised by mutual trust and respect for the each other, their willingness to collaborate and find solutions to any problems.

18.3 BENEFITS OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The involvement of parents and community in the actuaries of the ECCE centre benefits all i.e., the children, families, community and the ECCE programme.

Children Benefit When:

- Teachers understand and respect the family regardless of family structure, religious beliefs, languages spoken at home, socio-economic status and educational level of family members.
- There is a link between home and the ECCE centre/preschool.
- Parents provide appropriate and correct information to teachers, who are able to tell parents about what and how children are learning, what progress they have made and what the teachers might do to support their children for further learning.

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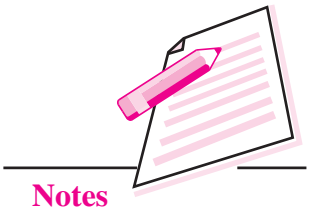
- Parents and family members reach out to them and encourage them to participate preschool activities.
- Parents update teachers about any significant changes in the child's home environment that may hinder their children's learning such as, arrival of sibling, moving to a new house, separation of parents, abuse, death in the family and so on.

Parents Benefit When:

- They are encouraged to take interest in the work of the preschool/ ECCE centre and engage themselves as partners in their children's learning.
- They are adequately prepared to understand child-rearing practices. This kind of guidance helps the parents to understand more about their child's development and thus, they can see their child's strengths and weaknesses more positively.
- They understand that the transition from home to preschool and from preschool to primary are very important milestones and that there should be continuity and strong linkages.

Preschool Programme Benefits When:

- Preschools involve the members of the community to work for the benefit of all. ECCE centres/preschool do not exist in isolation.
- Teachers collaborate with family and community members to solve developmental problems if any, by giving and receiving appropriate information.
- Practitioners know and use a variety of formal and informal communication strategies to establish and maintain positive relationships with families and community.
- Community and families both work towards collaborative partnerships. For example, teachers can modify the ECCE programme after getting relevant information from parents.
- Practitioners use opportunities for professional development and training in parental involvement.
- Practitioners try to learn about the different backgrounds of the children in their care, and accordingly communicate with families from diverse backgrounds.
- Practitioners make parents and families feel welcome in the setting, beyond just dropping off and picking their children.



- Practitioners facilitate parents' work schedules and create suitable parental involvement opportunities.
- Practitioners inform parents about the performance and activities of their children through meetings, phone calls, portfolios etc.
- Teachers allow parents to visit the preschool, observe activities and provide feedback.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 18.2

Fill in the blanks:

(a) For parents to be involved in their children's education, they need to be seen as ..... .

(b) Effective partnerships with family and ..... are characterised by mutual trust and respect for the each other.

(c) Children's development would be optimised when there is a linkage between the home and ..... in terms of experiences and expectations.

(d) A quality preschool setting should provide opportunities for parents to visit the setting, observe activities and provide .....

(e) The role of a teacher is to build on the knowledge and to encourage parents to work with the ..... in the best interest of each child.

(f) ..... are best able to rear children when they are adequately informed about work of the preschool/ECCE centre.

18.4 WAYS OF EFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY IN FUNCTIONING OF AN ECCE CENTRE /PRESCHOOL

As discussed earlier, the early education of young children is a shared responsibility of parents, schools and community as a whole. Therefore, parents and communities have a reciprocal responsibility to engage with preschools/ ECCE centres. The quality of this partnership will certainly determine the quality of the ECCE programme. There are many ways that can be adopted to promote the parent-teacher relationship. For example, as they get to know the parents, teachers can ask each parent's particular interest in being involved in the children's education and care. Some parents may be happy participating in classroom activities. Others may prefer to contribute as committee, member of a board, write in a newsletter, design a web page or participate in fund raising efforts.

Notes

First of all, teachers need to communicate with the parents and for this s/he has to find out ways to communicate to parents about their children.

18.4.1 Communication

ECCE settings or preschools should ensure that the staff and parents have both formal and informal opportunities for communication and information sharing about the child. While the formal opportunities may be quite apparent (e.g., meetings with parents), due consideration should also be given to creating informal interaction with parents, and may begin with something as fundamental as making them feel welcome within that setting. The practitioners/personnel need to ensure that this communication supports the child's learning and development and could be achieved through:

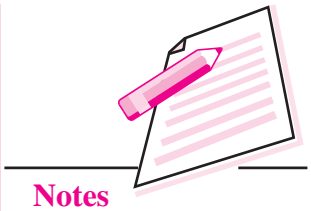
- communicating information to parents about their child's development and learning;
- integrating parents' knowledge and input into the planning and assessment of children's learning and development; and
- supporting parents in understanding children's learning and development.

The problem may be, how to communicate with parents. Many parents are working and they often do not get time to interact with the teachers and sometimes they do not even come for Parent Teacher Meeting (PTM). So, the teacher needs to find the way to involve and communicate with these parents.

18.4.1.1 Strategies of communicating to parents and community

Effective and meaningful communication between preschools, parents, community and children must be there to form the foundation in developing and maintaining quality partnerships.

- **Using a range of communication tools and channels**, including newsletters, websites, e-mails, assemblies, parent/teacher interviews, and PTMs.
- **Developing a preschool activity calendar** outlining activities, celebrations, events and holidays in the preschool year where engagement of the parents and community is very important. Specific activities can be used to engage them for example, volunteer parent coming to tell a story/rhyme.
- Using **Parent Teacher Meeting** (PTM) to talk about children's development and their progress.
- Planning **Home Visits,** if required, as it will help the teachers, get acquainted with the families of the children. The teacher can learn about the family's culture and special talents, etc.



- The teacher can communicate with the parents **during drop off and pick up time**. This allows parents to informally interact with the teacher.
- Use **bulletin and notice board** specifically meant for the parents to share notice for the meetings, nutrition menu, and other relevant issues.
- Involve parents on **field visits/excursions.**

There are number of other ways and strategies through which parents can be involved such as:

- helping in fund raising;
- cleaning and painting plant pots;
- preparing Teaching Learning Material (TLM);
- reading stories to children;
- helping in the classroom and working with small groups for activities like clay modeling;
- helping during festival celebrations;
- helping during annual function and cultural programmes

18.5 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Community ownership and participation of community members are important in the smooth functioning and success of the centre. Teachers need to talk to and convince members of the community about the significance of ECCE. Preschools, along with the help of the primary school, can plan and organise village camps for spreading ECCE and childcare messages. Community members including the Sarpanch and other panchayat members need to be explained the benefits of ECCE. It can be done through role plays, street play or nukkad natak, group discussions, exhibitions and using advocacy posters. This should be done by community motivators. Some notes in this regard could be:

- Teachers need to win the trust of the community to develop a school alumni group, and then ask for help to market materials such as preschool /ECCE centre banners and fence signs/logos, etc.
- As health is a priority for everyone, teachers need to generate and maintain contact with the relevant health professionals in the area to support referrals.
- As reciprocal responsibilities, preschools also need to provide ECCE centre/preschool facilities for community use, including library/adult learning, community meetings, etc.
- Involve village Sarpanch and community members in doing certain things for the ECCE centres such as provide safe drinking water, repair

Notes

classroom material, help organise PTMs, send young children regularly and punctually to the centres.

- Preschools can organise a 'Fixed Monthly ECCE Day' at the ECCE centre as suggested under the guidelines for fixed monthly ECCE day by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.This Fixed Monthly ECCE Day will allow communication channels to open between teacher and parents/community. Teachers and all others attached to the ECCE centre can organise activities for advocacy, spread awareness involvement of parents and community.

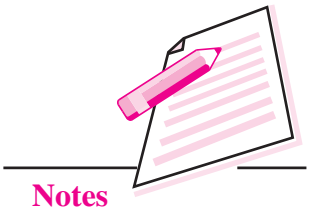
18.5.1 Key Features of Sound Partnerships between Early Childhood Centres and Parents

Some of the key features are:

- Parents' role in their child's early education is acknowledged by the teachers and other caregivers in the preschool;
- Recognition of the role played by parents in early education of their child and their continued involvement is crucial to successful learning;
- Parents feel welcome in the preschool and there are opportunities for collaboration among parents, teachers and children;
- Preschools provides access to information about their ECCE programme to the parents in a variety of ways;
- Recognition of expertise of parents and other adults in the family, and this expertise is used to support the learning opportunities provided within the preschool;
- Parents contribute to, and are kept fully informed of their child's progress and growth;
- Parents and children feel secure in the new setting; and
- Opportunities for learning provided through parent conferences, parents workshops, parents resource centre, etc.

ACTIVITY 18.1

Interview some parents who have children in ECCE centre/Preschool. Ask them about their experiences with early education, their concerns and centre practices they found helpful.



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18.6 ACTIVITIES TO BE ORGANISED FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

A list of suggestive activities to be organised on the **Fixed Monthly ECCE Day** at the preschool to involve the parents and community members is given. Preschool teachers may select the activities for each ECCE Day and ensure that selected activities are organised as per the time plan. The activities of the Fixed Monthly ECCE Day should be organised by involving all parents and community members.

18.6.1 Activities for Fixed ECCE Day

i. Display work of all children from the daily activities of the ECCE Programme (Art and craft work, worksheets etc).

ii. Performance by groups of children such as dance, drama, rhyme recitation, etc. (ensure participation of all children attending the preschool).

iii. Celebration of Sports Day (ensure participation of all children attending preschool).

iv. Demonstration of activities done by children for parents and community and explaining the rationale for conducting the activities.

v. Participation of all young children and parents/community in fun activities such as Bal Mela/Diwali/ Local Festival/Fairs, Exhibits etc.

vi. Parent-Teacher interaction which will include sharing assessment and taking overall feedback of the child.

vii. Development of play and learning material through parent and community participation.

viii. Display of advocacy material on ECCE (Charts/Audio-Visual).

ix. Development of play material through participation of local artisans/crafts persons.

x. Talks for the parents on topics listed in the 'Issues to be discussed with Parents'.

xi. Involve community for awards and incentives to children/teachers/caregivers/ helpers.

xii. Toy Bank/Activity Bank/Book Bank: Creating an area in the preschool where parents can donate toys, games, books, puppets and other play and learning material.

xiii. Collection of local cultural stories, rhymes, songs, games, drawings, art forms for activity bank.

xiv. Setting up 'Activity Corners or Interest Areas' at the preschool for example, block building area, manipulative play area , art and craft area, language area, dolls area and science area.

Source: - Guidelines for the Fixed ECCE Day, Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Notes

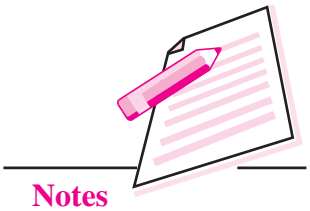
18.6.2 Issues to be discussed with Parents and Community on Fixed ECCE Day or during Parent Education Conference

A list of topics to be discussed with parents and community is given :

- Early stimulation;
- Importance of early childhood;
- Child growth and development;
- Learning and playing;
- Healthy nutrition for young children;
- Childhood diseases-prevention and treatment;
- Preparing children for preschool/ primary school;
- Managing difficult behavior;
- Encouraging and providing early literacy experiences;
- Early identification of children with special needs;
- Child abuse;
- Other issues may be identified as per the needs of the community or children.

18.6.3 Steps to Organise a Successful Parent Teacher Meeting/ Parent Conference

- Identification and arrangement of venue;
- Providing advance information to the parents and community about venue and timings of the conference;
- Preparing a list of activities identified for the conference;
- Holding meeting at parents level in a friendly environment;
- Providing baby- sitting services with the help of preschool helpers;
- Making seating arrangements in such a manner so that everyone feels involved and included;
- Allowing time to parents to interact with one another;
- Encouraging active and meaningful discussions; and
- Using warm up activities and games to reinforce the advocacy and parent education messages.



INTEXT QUESTION 18.3

1. List any eight activities which can be organised to involve parents and community in the functioning of an ECCE centre/preschool.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Parent and community participation in children's learning and in the school community should be acknowledged and valued. This shows the value of early childhood education.
- Teachers not only have to develop trusting relationships with their children but also have to build effective working relationships with parents and community members.
- Active participation of parents and community members in quality early childhood education enhances positive outcomes for children.
- There are a number of ways and strategies through which parents can be involved in their children's early education.
- ECCE Day would facilitate involvement of parents and community in early childhood care and education of children and establish partnerships for optimum development of young children.

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What is the need and importance of parents and community awareness in ECCE?
2. Explain any five benefits of parent's participation in ECCE programme.
3. How preschool is benefited when parents and community members actively participate in the preschool activities?
4. Suggest any five activities which can be organised for active participation of parents and community.
5. Suggest some strategies to effectively communicate with parents and community members.
6. How a successful ECCE Day/Conference should be organised?

Notes

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

18.1

(a) True

(b) False

(c) True

(d) False

(e) True

18.2

(a) partners

(b) community

(c) early childhood care and education centre

(d) feedback

(e) preschool/ ECCE centre

(f) families/parents

18.3

(a) Celebration of cultural programme

(b) Workshop on ECCE issues and concern

(c) Celebrating a Bal Mela/local festival

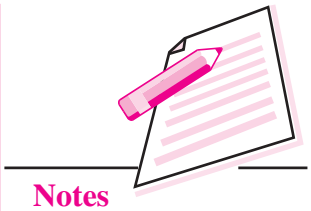
(d) Collection of local series and rhymes

(e) Exhibition of children's art work

(f) Celebration of sports day

(g) Parent as a storyteller in the classroom

(h) Presenting drama on ECCE for Community



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GLOSSARY

- **Activity areas**: Clearly defined and well equipped places in the preschool classroom which allow young children to explore materials on their own .These include dolls area, manipulative area, dramatic area, discovery or science area, water area, art area etc
- **Advocacy material:** Material which may influence decisions and mindsets
- **Child abuse:** Physical, sexual or emotional maltreatment or neglect of child/children
- **Collaborative partnership**: Participation of two organisations or parties who agree to share resources, for example, sharing knowledge of child development during parent conferences; helping and supporting school during school sports and cultural programme etc.
- **Consensus** : A general agreement ; accord
- **Early stimulation**: Activities which aim to optimise cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of young children
- **Learning outcomes**: Statements that help teacher understand the essential learning children have achieved
- **Sarpanch :** The head of a village

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WEB RESOURCES

- Siolta Research Digests. Parents and Families. http://www.siolta.ie/media/pdfs/ siolta_research_digests.

19

SMOOTH TRANSITION

Between birth and the age of eight years, many significant transitions happen in education for children. By the time young children enter pre-primary and primary school, they undergo various changes and transitions. They might have attended some childcare center, playgroup, *anganwadi*, *balwadi*, or a preschool. Each child responds in a different manner to such challenges and deals with the transitions initially from home to pre-primary school and then from pre-primary to primary school accordingly. During this process, it is important to know whether children are having a smooth transition. They keep learning to adjust to challenges and new environments.

Beginning preschool or kindergarten is a transition that holds many changes for children. It is a situation of great change in which children have not only to move into a new environment but also adapt to an unknown and new setting. The time when children make the transition to school can be a critical period in their development because it can impact on their level of involvement with school and therefore affect their future attainments in education.

A majority of children make successful transitions at different stages during their education. However, some children are more likely to find these changes to their daily routine more challenging compared with their peers. Those children who experience difficulties are more likely to come from vulnerable groups, for example from more deprived backgrounds or to have special educational needs. Children with poor socio-emotional skills, low self-esteem or low self-confidence may be particularly vulnerable during the home to school transition because they lack the skills that would provide them with stronger resilience to cope with new expectations of the new surroundings and social relationships. Children who might not have attended some childcare center, *playgroup, anganwadi, balwadi,* or a preschool have limited opportunities to socialise and manage their emotions. They may lack the competencies needed for a successful start and the ability to respond appropriately to the school environment and situations. A smooth home to school transition is important because research has shown a

link between poor transitions and less successful outcomes. Besides, less successful transitions may lead to subsequent poor attendance and disengagement with schools and later education.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying the lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning of transition and readiness;
- differentiate between pre-primary readiness and school readiness;
- discuss meaning, components and significance of school readiness;
- describe the role of parents, school, teachers and other caregivers in the smooth transition of children from home to preschool/school; and
- identify activities for the different components of school readiness.

19.1 UNDERSTANDING TRANSITION

A transition is a process which refers to a period of change from one situation to another. The home to school transition is the move young children make from home to a preschool or preschool to primary school. Transition from home to preschool normally occurs around age three. Parents can also find transition difficult and school efforts to support them during a transition period can help to reduce their stress and anxiety. Learning how to manage change requires certain skills. There are many ways we can help children and their families learn how to cope with transitions. One way is to provide them information in advance about expected changes.

How can one achieve a smooth home to school transition in early childhood? There is evidence to suggest that gradual changes and familiarisation are helpful. Children who have attended some childcare center, playgroup, *anganwadi*, *balwadi*, or a preschool or other early years settings before they start primary school may also experience challenges with regard to teaching methods and curriculum continuity. This includes the sudden change to more formal teaching and learning styles, greater emphasis on work, less time for play and fewer opportunities for child-initiated activities. A lack of support and advice for children and families during the transition process can also contribute to the level of transition difficulties that children and parents experience.

Research shows that from infancy, children develop emotional connections and attachments to familiar adults. Trusting relationships with familiar adults provides children with security, comfort, and a strong base that allows them to explore new environments and learn. The ability to build close relationships with adults and other children is challenging but essential for children's healthy adjustment

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during transition. This is especially true in new or difficult situations when children need the reassurance and comfort of caregivers. During transitions from home to school or from one early education setting to another, children separate from their families or familiar caregivers and need to develop secure relationships with new, unfamiliar adults. They also need to develop relationships with other children in the new environment. Children manage transition best when adults provide support.

19.1.1 Factors Impacting Transition

Individual differences also play a role in children's reactions to transition. While some children easily adjust to the new environment, others may need more time to adapt to the new environment.

Each child's temperament is different and the intensity of their emotional reactions to different situations varies. This may seriously impact their adjustment during transition. Many children have a difficult time adapting to new situations and people in everyday life. These children may find transitioning to a new learning environment challenging. The strategies used by them to manage emotions may also vary depending on their cultural background. Hence, children's ability to transition successfully to school depends upon:

1. their own personal characteristics (e.g. temperament, personality)
2. parent's characteristics (e.g. awareness, education, attitudes to school)
3. community characteristics (e.g. accessibility and quality of local services).

The transition to school is also likely to be more challenging for children from financially disadvantaged families, indigenous families, families with children who have a disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse families. Children from these backgrounds are also less likely to attend an early childhood education and care service before they start school. For children, successful transitions into and from the early learning environment can be facilitated by a range of approaches such as assisting children to understand the routines and practices of the settings they are transitioning into.

During both the transition to early learning environments and to school, a partnership between parents and educators/institutions can help parents manage this period of change.

The following factors are important to successful transition:

- building on children's prior and current practices
- ensuring children have an active role in preparing for transitions, in partnership with families

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- assisting children to understand transitions, routines and practices of the new settings they are moving to and feel comfortable with this process
- helping children negotiate changes in status or identity, especially during the school transition phase; and
- working collaboratively to make certain that a successful transition occurs.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.1

State whether the statements given below are true or false.

1. Good transition practices focus on the entirety of children.
2. Children's characteristics include temperament, IQ, personality, social skills and cognitive ability.
3. The transition to school is likely to be less challenging for children from financially disadvantaged families.
4. Parents are well prepared to assist with transition and readiness.

19.1.2 Transition from Home to Preschool

One way to ease the transition for young children from home to preschool is to familiarize them with both the centre and with the types of activities that are conducted within the school. Transition programmes are variously identified

as strategies and procedures for ensuring the smooth placement and adjustment of children to school and involving activities initiated by schools or preschools to bridge the gap between home and school experience. Smooth transition is dependent on the following connections:

Family-School Connections

The relationship between a family and the staff is invaluable in supporting positive school outcomes. Providing activities that nurture these relationships is an important part of a transition plan. Both the family and the school benefit from exchanging information on a regular basis.

Child-School Connections

One way to ease the transition for young children is to familiarize them with both the centre and with the types of activities that are conducted within.

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Peer Connections

Preschool teachers are often concerned that children beginning the year are not exhibiting the ability to get along with their peers. Just as adults are more comfortable with people they know, so are children. By arranging situations where preschoolers can interact with other children can help to form connections that will carry through to the beginning of the school year.

Community Connections

Connections between the community and the school are an important part of the transition. Continuity is enhanced when there are community linkages between schools and other agencies.

19.1.3 Transition from Home to Primary School

Ongoing collaboration and coordination of transition activities ensure that all children experience the best possible transition as they move from preschool or home into the school setting.

Some ideas or ways to do this include:

- Children interact directly with the future centre teacher through occasional visits to the centre.
- Children can visit their future school when there are special events being held.
- Parents can practice the types of activities normally done in the centre.These can include walking in a line, singing a kindergarten song, or playing kindergarten games. Additionally, parents can make scrapbooks with pictures of the teachers, support staff, building etc to help children become familiar with the school before they enter it.

The most effective way to prepare children to enter primary school, or any level of formal schooling, is to provide a dependable, strong support system. An ideal support system includes supportive communities, strong families, quality early care and education, prepared schools, and ready children.

Supportive communities play a crucial part in supporting families; working together to support children's school and long term success by providing families affordable access to information and services.

Strong families understand they are the most important people in the child's life. A strong family takes responsibility through direct, frequent and positive involvement and interest in the children. The adults in the family recognize their role as the child's first teacher.

Notes

Quality early care and education accepts all children and assists families with a seamless transition to a high-quality formal learning environment.

Prepared schools welcome all children while recognizing and reinforcing children's strengths and individual differences. Prepared schools are sensitive to cultural values and understand children develop holistically and at different rates.

Ready children are socially, personally, physically and intellectually prepared within developmentally appropriate expectations.

19.1.4 Transition Activities for Parents and Children

The more you discuss this transition in a matter-of-fact way, the more comfortable children will become. Encourage parents to prepare their children for ECCE centre with the following:

- Visit the centre so the children can meet the teacher and see what the centre is like. Try to arrange for them to see more than one type of classroom activity, such as seatwork time and free choice time.
- Show them where the washrooms are located.
- Find out what lunchtime will be like. If children are going to be getting a school lunch, they may have to learn how to open and use new kinds of containers.
- Read books about kindergarten.
- Answer children's questions in a straight forward way about what they will do in the centre. Tell them they will listen to stories, do counting activities, have group time, and play outside.

The transition from home to preschool can be a stressful time for both children and parents. However, if preschool teachers can facilitate collaboration between parents and familiarize children with the workings of centre, it will be a smoother process. Preschool teachers, with their knowledge of different learning styles and the temperaments of their students, can help everyone with this important transition.

19.1.4.1 Suggested activities for ensuring a smooth transition

Many schools are willing to offer children additional orientation activities, whether in the year prior to them starting, or in the few days prior to the first day of school. For example, the school might arrange for:

- children to meet their class teacher and other staff (aides) prior to starting
- parents to visit or spend time in a classroom before the school year ends

- children and parents to visit or spend time in the playground and getting to know the school layout, before the school year ends and/or in the holidays
- Children and parents to be shown where the toilets are, or where other facilities in the school are located and how they will get to them
- **Storytelling:** Some children find stories useful in learning what might happen and what might be expected of them in different situations. Parents could create one or more stories about school, perhaps using photos of the playground, classroom, teacher and support staff. The parents could ask the teacher about school and classroom routines to include in the stories.
- **Practicing the skills needed at school:** Depending on the children's abilities, the school may expect skills such as packing and unpacking their bag, going to the toilet, fastening their clothing, washing their hands, unwrapping their food and opening lunch boxes and drink bottles. These should be practiced with the children before school starts.

19.1.5 Benefits of Facilitating Smooth Transition

Some signs of successful transitions are:

- Children will like school and look forward to going to school
- Children will show steady growth in academic skills
- Parents will become actively involved in their children's education—at home, in school, and in the community
- Classroom environments will promote positive feelings for both teachers and children
- Teachers, staff members, and families will value one another
- Schools and programmes will celebrate cultural diversity in their communities
- Developmentally appropriate practices will be visible within the classroom

19.2 UNDERSTANDING READINESS

School readiness is a multi-faceted phenomenon comprising development in the physical/health, social and emotional domains, as well as language acquisition, literacy and cognition. New perspectives on school readiness recognize that schools also need to be ready to meet the varied needs of children and their families.

Notes

The concept of school readiness has concerned early childhood educators at both preschool and primary school levels for several years. Children who have commenced school without developing vital readiness skills, have been identified ' to be at risk' for their future academic, social and occupational success.

Previously, school readiness was understood in one of two ways: it was either simply assumed on the basis of chronological age, and children were admitted into school when they reached the designated age; or it was thought of in terms of specific skills and competencies that could be measured and assessed against established norms and standards.

Current research highlights the importance of considering all aspects of children's development when considering school readiness. It is essential to provide support, experiences and effective early intervention strategies, where necessary, to optimise children's development well before children approach school entry.

In general, children who are ready for school are cooperative with adults and with other children. They show self-control in most situations, follow the rules of their home and preschool, and can use their free time in an acceptable way. They are happy to share their toys and other belongings and can give in or compromise with their friends when appropriate.

School readiness is a measure of how prepared children are to succeed in school, cognitively, socially and emotionally. Children who are unprepared to start school often fall behind in reading, leaving them unable to read well by the end of third grade. To reach these children, we need to engage parents, promote preschool programmes and invest in good quality childcare.

School readiness is identified as:

Demonstrating Readiness: Children demonstrate the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.

Approaching Readiness: Children exhibit some of the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.

Emerging Readiness: Children display minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.

Children whose readiness skills and behaviors are identified as developing or emerging require instructional support to be successful in formal schools. School readiness is arriving at school with the knowledge, skills and physical and emotional health needed to successfully participate. This includes:

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Approaches to learning: To what extent do children show curiosity, enthusiasm and persistence toward learning tasks?

Cognition and general knowledge: Do children have basic knowledge about the world around them? Do they know shapes, numbers, own name, etc?

Language development: To what extent do children use verbal and nonverbal skills to convey meaning and understanding?

Physical well-being: Are children growing and developing properly? Are they healthy?

Social and emotional development: Do children interact well with others and communicate their feelings in appropriate ways?

19.2.1 Significance and Components of Readiness

School readiness refers to the academic knowledge, independence, communication, and social skills children need to do well in school. Why are school readiness skills important? The development of school readiness skills allows school teachers to expand and further develop children's skills in the specific areas of social interaction, play, language, emotional development, physical skills, literacy and fine motor skills. School readiness means children enter school ready to join in and benefit from early learning experiences that promote their success**.**

It is never too early to start providing the kinds of experiences that will help children enter school, ready to succeed. Getting children ready for school requires to spend time reading, talking, and playing with them.

Some expected characteristics that should be displayed by school-ready children are:

- Independent in toileting
- Able to dress themselves
- Understands expected levels of behavior
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Can take turns and share
- Can sit still for a short period
- Can separate from parents/caregivers

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INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.2

Fill in the blanks

1. Many schools are willing to offer children additional ..... activities.
2. Transition programmes are identified as strategies and ..... for ensuring the smooth placement.
3. ..... refers to the academic knowledge, independence, communication, and social skills children need to do well in school.
4. Children can sit still for a short period is one of the expected ..... of readiness.
5. School readiness recognizes that schools also need to be ..... to meet the varied needs of children and their families.

19.2.2 Components of Readiness for Preschool

The broad aim of education is to help children develop holistically which means that children achieve their potential in all the domains of development- cognitive, socio-emotional, physical and language and literacy. The holistic growth of children implies that they be given variety of opportunities of different kinds to help them in their all-round development.

Components of readiness include the following:

1. Academic readiness

Before entering preschool children should have basic knowledge of themselves, their families, and the world around them. Through play and interactions with caring adults, children can come to school with many skills that teachers can build upon.

Activities for parents to **get their child academically ready for school:**

- Read to your child daily and talk about what you've read.
- Visit the library. Check out books and attend story times.
- Sing rhyming songs and do finger plays.
- Put child's name on their clothing and toys to help the child recognize the name in print.
- Encourage your child to write her or his name.
- Help your child learn basic colours by pointing and naming objects like "green trees," "red apples," or "blue coats."

Notes

- Give your child puzzles and games that require counting and problem solving. Let your child scribble, draw, write, and cut and paste.
- Sing the alphabet song with your child and provide letter magnets or other toys that will help him/her begin to recognize the letters of the alphabet.
- Take your child to the zoo, park, grocery store and post office. Talk about the sights and sounds of your day.
- Make time for your child to sing, dance, climb, jump, run, and ride tricycles or bikes.
- Choose childcare that promotes learning with well planned, fun, and interesting activities.

2. Social readiness

Social readiness is as important as academic readiness. Being able to get along with other children, follow directions, take turns, and say good-bye to parents are skills that teachers hope to see from incoming children.

Activities for parents to **get their child socially ready for school:**

- Set rules and give consequences for breaking them.
- Have regular routines for mealtime and bedtime.
- Encourage your child to play with and talk to other children.
- Encourage your child to take turns and share with other children.
- Encourage your child to finish difficult or frustrating tasks once they have begun them.
- Encourage your child to consider the feelings of others.
- Model and discuss positive ways for your child to express her or his feelings.
- Discourage hitting, biting, screaming, and other negative behaviors.
- Kiss and hug your child several times a day.

3. Independence

When children complete basic self-help tasks such as zipping their coats or tying their shoes, they feel a great sense of pride. Independence builds confidence and self esteem. In school, children will be expected to do many things on their own.

Activities for parents to **get their child become independent and be ready for school:**

Notes

- Buy shoes and clothing that are easy for children to buckle, zip, and fasten on their own.
- Let your child get dressed and put on shoes by him or herself.
- Encourage your child to take turns and share with other children.
- Let your child do simple chores like setting the table at mealtimes or cleaning up toys after playing.
- Encourage independent toileting and hand washing.
- Let your child work independently on activities such as completing puzzles.

4. Communication skills

Listening and speaking are the first steps to reading and writing in the preschool years. Through conversations with parents, teachers, and friends, children learn about the people, places, and objects that they will later read and write about. It is through speaking that young children tell us what they know and understand about the world.

To **make sure that children can communicate their thoughts and feelings in school, parents should:**

- Have regular conversations with their child.
- Encourage their child to listen and respond to others when they speak.
- Answer the child's questions, even if the answer is "no."
- Help their child learn and use new words.
- Explore language through singing, rhyming, songs, and chants.
- Model the language they want the child to use.
- Write notes to their child.

5. Health and Physical Well-Being

Activities for parents to ensure **their child is physically ready for school:**

- Eats a balanced diet
- Gets plenty of rest
- Receives regular medical and dental care
- Has had all necessary immunizations
- Can run, jump, climb, and does other activities that help develop large muscles and provide exercise
- Uses pencils, crayons, scissors, and paints and does other activities that help develop small muscles

Notes

INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.3

Explain the following in one sentence :

a. Academic readiness

b. Social readiness

c. Independence

d. Health and physical well-being

e. Communication skills

19.2.3 Components of Readiness for School

Preschool is more like an extension of daycare. This is because the teaching style offered here is less structured while, schools. have more complicated activities to prepare children for formal reading, writing etc. The main components are:

Emotional and Social Preparation of Children

- Follow simple rules and routines
- Can express own needs and wants
- Curious and motivated to learn
- Learning to explore and try new things
- Have opportunities to be with other children and learn to play/share with others
- Can be away from parents/family without being upset
- Can work well alone
- Have the ability to focus and listen

Language, Math and General Knowledge

- Use sentences of five to six words
- Sing simple songs
- Recognize and say simple rhymes
- Learning to write name and address
- Learning to count and play counting games

Notes

- Learning to identify and name shapes and colours
- Have opportunities to listen to and make music and to dance
- Know the difference between print and pictures
- Listen to stories read to them
- Have opportunities to notice similarities and differences
- Are encouraged to ask questions
- Understand simple concepts of time (night and day, today, yesterday, tomorrow)
- Learning to sort and classify objects

Teachers agree that key indicators of children's social and emotional readiness for preschool and first grade are:

i. Readiness to accept new responsibilities and greater independence

ii. Strong enthusiasm for learning

iii. Ability to make new friends and the ability to respect others

The focus of the school readiness programme is on making sure that children are emotionally and socially mature to succeed in school.

19.3 ROLE OF PARENTS, SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND OTHER CAREGIVERS

When young children enter the school for the first time, they tend to compare it to their home. Therefore, the school environment needs to be stress-free and inviting so that they feel secure. Teachers must try to establish a rapport with them and keep them happy. This would make them emotionally secure. Young children may not enter school well prepared unless their parents, families and communities provide the environment and experiences that support their holistic development to be furthered in the school. The process of readying children for school includes:

- Ready children
- Ready parent, families and communities
- Ready school
- Ready teachers and other workforce

19.3.1 Ready Children

When children enter a preschool, the teacher needs to observe and assess their preparedness while they are engaged in different activities. The teacher should

observe whether children demonstrate readiness, are approaching readiness or show emerging readiness, and accordingly plan activities to support them. As stated earlier in this lesson,children with developing and emerging readiness skills require more instructional support to be successful.

Such an exercise would help the teacher to adjust the programmes as well as her teaching strategies according to needs of the children. The teacher should note that this is not a one-time activity but a continuous process. It could be made an integral part of the daily activities by the teacher. The teacher should plan developmentally appropriate activities and provide opportunities and materials for the children and allow them to explore, discover and play, and provide appropriate challenges. This process would help to ready children for the pre-primary or primary stage.

19.3.2 Ready Parents/Families and Communities: Their roles

The role of adults is immense in giving children a conducive and stimulating environment. Mothers and adults who are around young children are their first teachers. Their role is crucial in making children ready for school as they can provide them with steady and supportive relationships, and a safe and joyful environment to help generate curiosity and excitement about learning.

Just like families, communities play a crucial role in readying the children.Local community groups, business and corporate houses and governments should work collectively to develop early childhood care and education facilities. They can contribute in a number of ways such as opening quality daycare and early childhood education centers, providing space and equipment for the centers, orienting and educating parents on the need for ECE and providing educational and technical support to the workers of the preschool centres or *anganwadis*.

Parents of young children need to be aware of the importance of ECE and early brain development. They should provide a loving and nurturing environment at home. They may buy age-appropriate toys and play material for young children. Parents should try to ensure a smooth transition from home to ECE centre where children will, for the first time, be separated from home to move into a new environment. Parents should also make sure that children are toilet-trained and are able to express their needs to the caregivers at the ECE Centre. The role of parents and communities is crucial.They should learn about the various activities they can undertake at home to ready the children and ensure a smooth transition from home to the centre. Schools may organise parents' education and awareness programme to help them know the support they can provide to young children to promote a smooth transition from home to school.

Notes

19.3.3 Ready Schools: Their Role

The transition from home, childcare centre or a cre'che to a pre-primary setting requires to involve parents and community. The pre-primary centres/schools can organise parent education workshops and work with parents, creche workers and other community institutions and members to prepare children for pre-primary school. Such planned interactions will help the teacher gather relevant information about children's skills and talents as well as about their special needs.

In the same way, when the children progress from pre-primary to grade one, teachers of the primary school and parents need to be involved with pre-primary teacher to understand the progress and attainment levels of their children. It will facilitate a smooth transition from pre-primary to primary school, the new and more formal educational environment. The portfolios of preschool children should be shared with and given to the grade one teacher to help her/him understand children better at the time of entry.

Pre-primary and primary schools should be ready to welcome children in terms of infrastructure, balanced and developmentally appropriate programme and daily schedules, teaching learning material and teaching strategies, supportive learning environment and appropriate teacher-student ratio.

A ready school curriculum is drawn up based on children prior experiences and skills and meaningful experiences. Secondly, schools must respect individual differences amongst children in terms of language, culture and exposure to learning. This is possible if the school works in close collaboration with the home and community. Young children in an ECE Centre need easy access to child-friendly toilet facilities, accessible lockers/shelves and other storage space. Thus, the ECE centres and classrooms of the early grades of primary schools should be such that they require minimal amount of moving, carrying and supervision. It will be good if the ECE Centre is located within or near the primary school. Classrooms should be inviting and have a print-rich environment which should be changed from time to time to enhance children's interest, observational and learning skills. All displays meant for children should be kept at the eye level of children. The classrooms should have sufficient material and equipment such as crayons, clay, blocks of various sizes, pencils, picture books, story books, games, dolls, toys, puzzles and so on, to be available to all children.

19.3.4 Ready Teachers and other Workforce: Their Roles

All the teachers and caregivers should have a good understanding of a quality programme and children's developmental characteristics. The knowledge of

Notes

developmental characteristics helps them to plan and modify the programme, based on the needs, interests and capabilities of children. The teachers and other adults who surround the children should be good observers so as to understand each of their children and match changes in the daily programme, if needed. Teachers and other support staff should first of all provide emotional security to the children and make classroom atmosphere supportive. The daily programme should be flexible and the approach should be play-based. They should share their observations of each child, to help create a supportive environment.

Teachers and other personnel of ECE centers and primary schools should get appropriate training to handle young children. The pre-primary teachers should be particularly trained to deal with the individual differences amongst children and ensure smooth transition at all levels. Regular interaction, formal or informal, between pre-primary and early primary teachers make the transition further simpler. All teachers and staff of ECCE centres should be provided with opportunities for upgrading their skills and competencies through in-service training programmes, workshops and refresher courses. In addition, they could seek the help of necessary support services i.e. counsellors, special educators to meet the specific educational and other needs of children coming from various backgrounds.

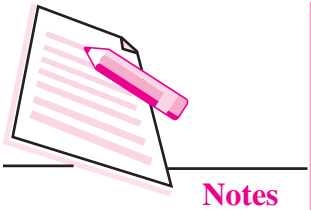
19.4 PLANNING AND DESIGNING ACTIVITIES FOR DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL READINESS

The success of any activity depends on how well it is prepared and implemented. Reading and writing also require preparation, especially when it has to be taught to young children. Introduce the skills only after children are ready both physically and mentally. Anything introduced before the children are ready could not only disturb the learning process, but also create an aversion to school and subsequent drop out. The teacher should plan simple and interesting activities to promote development in each domain. Some exemplar activities in different domains of development are:

(a) Language and Cognitive Development

Before learning how to read and write, children should be able to express themselves clearly and understand others. Hence, the teacher should first provide children with such experiences that promote language development before they introduce reading and writing to them. Certain activities that are helpful are:

1. Conversation (free and guided)
2. Storytelling and rhymes
3. Play (structured and unstructured)



Notes

3. Solving riddles
4. Make-believe play / role play / dramatics
5. Excursions and walks

Reading, Writing and Number Readiness

Reading Readiness

For reading readiness, activities and experiences should be provided to children to prepare them to learn the skill of reading later. Activities like matching similar objects, picture conversation, spotting the odd one or the identical one are some such. Children should be given opportunities to listen and discriminate between different sounds as well as identifying the beginning and end sounds of words. Some activities are:

a) Visual discrimination (Recognising differences in shapes/sizes/colours etc.)

b) Sound discrimination (Recognising differences in sounds)

c) Development of observation skill and memory (Recall of objects seen)

d) Classification of objects (according to size, features etc.)

e) Sequential thinking

f) Development of vocabulary

Writing Readiness

For writing readiness, the teacher should provide activities that help in the development of eye-hand coordination in children. Some activities are:

a) Clay modelling

b) Colouring within enclosed space/picture

c) Drawing on slate/floor

d) Tracing

e) Copying forms

f) Joining dots

g) Drawing zig-zag; straight lines

Number Readiness

Before teaching numbers, it is necessary that children be given specific activities/ experiences related to number work, like:

a) Classification/sorting

b) Sequential thinking

c) Problem solving

d) Pre-number concept such as big-small, tall- short, more-less, thick-thin, far-near, wide-narrow, low-high, before-after etc.

(b) Physical-Motor Development

Children have a natural inclination for motor play activity. Therefore, the school programme should always include enough time for games. Play helps to promote children's health and physical development. Besides, it helps to develops good social habits, of cooperation, waiting for their turn, leadership quality etc.

(c) Creative and Aesthetic Development

Children find it difficult to write in the beginning. It is necessary to plan a readiness programme before formal writing is started. It has been observed that when children begin to write, they find it difficult to hold a pencil properly and use it on paper. The reason for this is that their hand and finger muscles are not yet well coordinated. Creative activities like colouring and drawing, crafts etc. help in the development of muscle control and fine motor development.

Creative activities like paper tearing and pasting, pasting leaves, making pictures on wet ground or drawing with chalk etc. are important for the development of writing readiness. Depending on the materials available, the teacher should introduce varieties of activities to children. They not only develop good muscle control by doing such activities, they also develop their imagination, aesthetic appreciation and social skills.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 19.4

Match column A with column B

Column A	Column B
1. Language development	a. Indoor and outdoor games
2. Reading readiness	b. Drawing , joining dots
3. Writing readiness	c. Storytelling, rhymes
4. Number readiness	d. Visual discrimination
5. Motor development	e. Classification of objects

Notes

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- Transition : Meaning and Significance
- Factors effecting transition
  - Children's characteristics
  - Parental characteristics
  - Community characteristics
- Transition from home to school
- Transition from preschool to school
- Transition activities for parents and children
- Benefits of smooth transition
- Readiness: Meaning significance and components
- Significance and components of readiness
- Readiness activities for Parents
- Role of parents, schools, teachers and other caretakers
  - Ready children
  - Ready parents, families and communities
  - Ready schools
  - Ready teachers and other workers
- Planning and designing activities for different components of school readiness

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. List the school readiness skills and behaviors required for instructional support in schools.

Notes

2. Briefly explain the connections on which smooth transition is dependent.
3. What are the signs of successful transition?
4. What do you mean by ready parents, schools, teachers and community?
5. List some activities the parents need to undertake to ensure language development of children.
6. List some activities the parents need to undertake to ensure reading, writing and number readiness.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

19.1

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False

19.2

1. orientation
2. procedures
3. school readiness
4. characteristics
5. ready

19.3

a. Academic readiness : Children have basic knowledge of themselves, their families, and the world around them

b. Social readiness : Children are able to get along with other children, follow directions, take turns

c. Independence : When children complete basic self-help tasks

d. Health and physical well-being: Children are physically ready for school

Notes

e. Communication skills : Children tell us what they know and understand about the world

19.4

1. c, 2. d, 3. b, 4. e, 5. a

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20

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

In a classroom we come across children from different backgrounds, of varying abilities, interests, attitudes and aptitudes. Despite the apparent similarities and the fact that they behave like a group, each child is unique and has an individual learning style and learning needs. The classroom is home to children from different regions, cultures, religions, languages, socio-economic backgrounds and traditions. It is vital for all the players in an ECCE programme to make themselves familiar with varying learning needs and understanding their implications for planning and implementing day-to-day teaching learning activities.

In this lesson, you will study the basic aspects of diversity and various factors leading to diversity. You will also study the impact and significance of diversity on educational needs and its implications on making an ECCE programme accessible to and equitable for all children.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- define diversity;
- explain different factors leading to diversity and their implications;
- discuss differences in home language and the medium of instruction in school;
- describe influences of gender and caste stereotypes on children's development; and
- discuss ways to promote equitable participation of all in learning and play.

Notes

20.1 UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

Let us begin with a classroom where the teacher is linking classroom teaching learning with food eaten by families during different festivals.

Classroom Scene

Seema is excited today and is not able to concentrate on the classwork given to her by her teacher. She is eagerly waiting for the lunch break as today, it is her turn to share her favorite festival food and the details related to the festival with the entire class. This is how her teacher has linked the lesson on food with daily lives of students. She has also attempted to sensitize students that different people of different regions serve and eat different foods on festivals and special occasions.

Let us reflect on the classroom scene:

- Are all children of the class being involved in this activity?
- Has the teacher been able to sensitise the children about the diversity in the class?

20.1.1 Defining Diversity

The term diversity originated from the Latin word *diversus* which indicates differences. Diverse means 'differing from each other' and 'made up of distinct characteristics, qualities, or elements'. Being a large country with a large population, India presents endless varieties of physical features and cultural patterns. It is a land of diversity in race, religion, caste, language, and so on. Within school also we see various identities of race, gender, age and social status. Hence, we need to be equipped to address it in the classroom. The case discussed in the beginning of this lesson, where Seema's teacher has initiated a festival food sharing exercise to highlight cultural and regional differences is a simple initiative the teacher has taken to make children aware of existing diversity among their peers besides linking the curriculum with daily life.

Diversity, therefore, consists of visible and invisible factors, which include personal characteristics such as socio-economic background, culture, personality and workstyle.

In short, the term diversity indicates uniqueness or differences without any judgment attached to the differences or unique characteristics. Diversity gives recognition, acceptance and respect to individual differences, irrespective of the origin.

Presence of diverse groups in a school provide opportunities for mutual learning, exploration and celebrations in safe, positive and nurturing environments. Diversity might also be understood as the collection of characteristics and uniqueness of members of diverse group. Understanding diversity is important for engaging with the individuals who may think, act or work differently from us.

20.2 FACTORS LEADING TO DIVERSITY AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN LEARNING

The large number of different cultures knitted together in such a close and perfect manner make India's diversity one of the wonders of the world. Usually, when people discuss diversity, the conversation focuses on religion and caste. However, to accurately talk about diversity, especially in the classroom, we need to consider more factors like:

- Race
- Multilingualism
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Socio-economic status
- Age
- Level of physical activities
- Religious beliefs
- Learning style

The list above is not exhaustive. Many more factors may be added to it. Let us now understand how each of these factors generates diversity and also how it affects the teaching-learning environment in our schools and classrooms.

Race: Race is division of human kind on the basis of physical features like height, weight, colour of eye, skin etc. as well as also on the basis of social behaviors, norms, customs and practices. It is a classification system which is used to categorise humans into distinct populations or groups by anatomical features related to body structure or physique. These are mostly hereditary, passed on from parents to their children. These variations are due to geographical, historical, linguistic, or religious belongingness.

ACTIVITY 20.1

Can you recall having met children of different race from yours? Did you observe any similarities/differences between them and you?

Notes

Children with different physical features may not affect the classroom processes directly but may have implications for classroom dynamics. Like, tall children are often selected for sports,children with a fair complexion may generate more appreciative comments whereas a particular colour or shape of eyes may not be easily accepted by others. A child with fair complexion may be the first choice of the teacher for the role of king/queen/fairy, making other children think that kings/queens/fairies are only fair skinned. This creates stereotypes that are avoidable. Diversity in physical traits associated with race, is a natural phenomenon and needs to be accepted.

Caste: In India, caste is a system of classification determined by birth. Caste can be defined as a system of rigid social categories characterized by hereditary status and social barriers sanctioned by custom, law, or religion. In the Indian context, caste refers to a social group to which membership is decided by birth. Members of a caste group are usually endogamous in that they tend to marry among themselves. Castes are broadly divided into:

- Scheduled Castes
- Scheduled Tribes
- Other Backward Classes
- Forward Classes

Socially, the caste system involves division of people into social groups (castes) where duties and rights are determined by birth with hardly any flexibility. The basic rights and duties among various castes is both unequal and hierarchical.

The school, a place of education, should propagate equality and equity and promote no discrimination based on caste. Some issues faced by schools pertaining to discrimination are during distribution of mid-day meal, seating arrangement, and involvement of children in learning activities. Another not avoidable a practice observed is related to the school site. If the place where the school is to be setup is near the residence of lower caste people, people from upper castes may not be willing to send their children. In a reverse situation, children from lower castes may feel shy, discouraged and hesitant to study in schools located close to the residence of upper caste people.

Multi-lingualism: In India, each state has its own language. It is not just the accent, but the dialect that also changes from region to region. Multi-lingualism is the act of using, or promoting the use of, multiple languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers. The ability to speak in more than one language is appreciated and respected globally.

With increased mobility of people in search of work and food, children from different geographical regions speaking different languages end up studying together. With the Right to Education, all children are expected to be in school.

Many a times, it has been observed that children struggle to follow the teaching taking place in the class due to the divide between home and school language. Only when the medium of instruction in the school is the same as the one used at home, can learning become effective. That is when the drop out rate will fall. The divide between the medium of instruction and home language must be overcome by teachers gradually by respecting and accepting the home language and building upon the strength in one language to facilitate the learning of the second and third language.

We all use language to communicate with each other, but persons who cannot hear properly use sign language to communicate. Similarly, persons with vision difficulties use Braille script to write and take notes. Thus, we can say that another dimension of multilingualism is recognizing and valuing sign language and Braille as a medium of communication just like any other language of the country.

Ethnicity: Ethnicity refers to belonging to a social group with common regional and cultural traditions. This factor greatly impacts textbooks, curriculum, pedagogy as well as the school's day-to-day functioning. Each ethnic group has its own customs, art and artefacts, clothing style etc. The child belonging to these groups brings diverse and rich experiences to the classroom which can enrich the peers as well. These local customs and traditions have direct bearing on the education system. The textbook, curriculum, school working days, scheduling of holidays, school timings, medium of instruction etc are all affected by ethnicity. It is also important to integrate the wide range of cultural arts and artefacts in the curriculum and the everyday routines of the classroom.

The school administration and the teacher need to find ways and means to facilitate the learning experience of all children enrolled and acknowledge their ethnicity.

The teacher can organize special festivals, food day, dress day, story day, invite parents and give out activity sheets, to sensitise children about the different ethnic groups in the class.

Gender: The layman understands gender as male and female. Gender needs to be understood in terms of social and cultural identity associated with being a boy or a girl. 'Sex' is a term closely related and often used interchangeably with gender. Sex is a biological characteristic whereas gender is a social characteristic. Biological characteristic of sex is determined by genes, hormones and male-female reproductive organs.

Understanding gender in terms of social cultural identity involves realizing the expected social characteristics and behaviors expected from a boy or a girl. Children's toy preferences are significantly related to parental sex-typing, such as girls playing with dolls and boys participating in sports. In the Indian context,

both the father and the mother encourage traditional gender roles in their children. Core gender identity is usually formed by the age of three years. After that, it is extremely difficult to change, and attempts to change it can be difficult. Both biological and social factors influence its formation.

Differences in treatment between girls and boys make them sensitive towards their expected roles in the society. These roles may not always promote equality of opportunities among gender. Presence or absence of girls in the classroom not only affect the teaching learning process but also places a demand on the administration to create facilities for girls in terms of physical infrastructure. One major manifestation of this is the provision separate toilets for them and special training of the human resource of the centre in gender-sensitive issues.

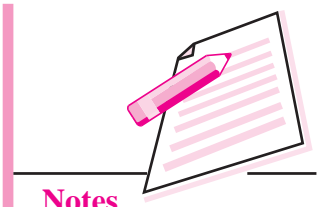
The desired modification in the teaching learning process includes creating learning situations which allows equal participation of both genders. Similarly, while encouraging children to be physically active in the ECCE centre, the teacher should take care that the girls equally participate in the activities like running, climbing, playing with a bat and ball, football etc. and involving boys in playing with dolls, kitchen set and doll houses.

The dropout rates of girls, specially from the marginalized sections of society and the rural areas continues to be grim. Schools must ensure the girl child feels welcome and secure. In case the girl is disabled or challenged or belongs to disadvantaged or weaker section of the society, she faces double or triple discrimination. Firstly because she is a girl, secondly due to her disability or challenge and lastly of being born in the disadvantaged or weaker community thus aggravating the situation.

Socio-economic status

This is one of the major factors responsible for diversity in the classroom. Those belonging to lower or higher socio-economic groups need to be given due space in the textbooks, curriculum and classroom activities. All children should be treated as equal irrespective of their socio-economic background. Uniforms for school children were perhaps initiated with the same philosophical assumption.

The diversity due to socio-economic status is more apparent in those ECCE centres where children are not expected to wear a uniform, leaving them free to dress in casuals or home wear or home clothes. The diversity in the clothes worn by the children indicates a lot about the financial and social status of the family. The same is also true about their school bags and the school stationery (geometry box, lunch box, pencil, crayons etc).Diversity due to socio-economic status can be utilised as teaching learning resource as each child brings with them their own experiences to the classroom which can be shared and used for teaching learning.



Notes

INTEXT QUESTIONS 20.1

Explain the following in one sentence only:

(a) Caste

(b) Race

(c) Multi-linguism

(d) Ethnicity

(e) Gender

Physical disabilities: Physical disabilities are related to impairments leading to some restrictions of the physical activities. These should not be used as an excuse for not involving the children with disabilities in teaching-learning activities along with the rest of the group. Presence of children with disability in the classroom provides an opportunity to the teachers as well as school administration to grow professionally.

Children with physical disabilities can be easily included in classroom activities, by slight modification in the pedagogy. For example, during rhyme time, children with hearing impairment can be included if the teacher incorporates sign language. This will give them a sense of rhythm and promote belongingness. The child with visual impairment may be easily involved in colouring activities by giving them a colouring sheet with tactile boundaries made using sticks, or thread or simply pasting an article of the same shape (example bangle for a circle) on the sheet.

The teacher can also learn from parents the signs used at home for common words like no, yes, I want, I like, I need, etc. In the classroom, these signs can be accompanied by flash cards or pictures which the child can use while communicating with teachers and peers. A sign language expert or special educator may also be consulted to facilitate communication.

While dealing with children with disabilities, our words, or how we address them matter a great deal. It is always advisable to use the word 'child' first followed by the type of disability. For example, instead of saying 'autistic child' say, 'child with autism.' Some suggestions are listed below:

Use Child with disability **Instead of** Disabled child

Use Child with an intellectual disability **Instead of** mentally retarded, retarded, idiot,moron etc.

Use Child using wheel chair **Instead of** wheel-chair bound, confined to wheel chair

Use Child with visual impairment **Instead of** visually impaired child

➢ **Religious Belief:** These refer to beliefs related to God, creation of humanity, rituals, festivals etc. All religions have equal rights. India is probably the only country in the world which is home to so many religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoraastrianism etc. For many people, religion is an important part of daily life. Religious values, beliefs and customs are shaped by the family of the child.

Children carry their experiences of religious practices from home and community to the classrooms. Children should be encouraged not only to recognize these differences but also to appreciate the differences. Each religion has its own set of festivals which can be identified with their special rituals and decorations. The diversity that exists in religious beliefs provides an opportunity to teachers to promote the ideas of secularism and teaching children that all religions are equal and deserve to be treated with respect. They need to be provided with an opportunity to express themselves either through drawings, poems or stories or verbally etc. The main festival of various religions could be discussed in the classroom with regard to:

- when celebrated
- how celebrated
- special food prepared
- what is their role in celebrations
- how they feel during the celebrations

ACTIVITY 20.2

Create a diversity profile of your neighborhood. The following format may be useful in creating it.

Factors of diversity	Number of families
Race	
Ethnicity	
Gender	
Religion	

Cognitive style: This refers to the difference in the way children respond to the educational interventions and assimilate learning. Each child has a particular style of learning depending on individual personality and exposure as well as

access to learning resources. Variation in cognitive style adds vareaty to the classroom and has direct implications for the educational administrators as well as the teachers. The class teacher must adopt teaching methods to cater to all the children in the class. Teaching a concept to cater to different learning styles benefits the whole class. This may require using different methods for teaching the same thing, resulting reinforcement and promoting better learning. For example, while narrating a story, the teacher can use a story book with the narration. This will cater to both the auditory learner and the visual learner. Auditory learners enjoy listening to the story while visual learners enjoy the words and pictures in the book with the narration.

The benefits of classroom diversity are both academic and socio-emotional. Teachers must give importance to creating diverse learning opportunities for children thereby exposing them to diverse experiences. This will make a positive impact on their development and immensely impact society.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 20.2

State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Children should be discouraged from expressing or sharing their religious beliefs with their peers.

(b) Each child has her/his own style of learning.

(c) Auditory learner enjoys listening to stories.

(d) Children learn through discussions and debates in a group.

(e) Children carry their experiences of religious practices from school to home.

20.3 DIVIDE BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL LANGUAGES

India is a multilingual country and the Constitution is committed to protect the multilingual nature of India. In terms of linguistic diversity, it has a variety of languages and dialects. The home and school language divide indicates the situation where medium of instruction at school is different from the language used at home. For example, the school may use English as a medium of instruction while at home, Tamil is used by the child and her/his family to communicate with each other and with neighbours.

The divide between the home and school can occur due to :

- Family moving from one part of country to another
- Lack of availability of a school using mother tongue as medium of instruction in the area

Notes

- Local dialect not given its due importance in the school
- Being first generation learners
- Teachers coming from different language background

20.3.1 Effects of home and school language divide on children

- Not able to make friends with peers
- Not able to score/achieve/perform well in academics
- Repeated failure or poor performance in school leads to low self-esteem and higher dropout rate
- Low self-confidence
- Lack of belongingness to the school and academics
- Not able to read, write and express
- Children are less likely to enrol and succeed in school
- Parents are less likely to participate in their children's learning
- Children do not take pride in their identity and heritage

NCF, 2005 respects the multilingual character of Indian society and suggests it should be seen as a resource to promote multilingual proficiency in a child. All languages including tribal as well as English should be valued equally. All mother tongues are appreciated as an important link between the young child and the school. In case of first generation learner, teaching in the initial years should be in mother tongue and less stress on the learning of second and third language as support may not be available to the child at home to learn these languages.

The absence of such divide implies:

- Schooling becomes fun and a joyful experience
- Self-confidence of children will improve
- Children will be able to relate with the school experiences, hence develop a feeling of belongingness of "my school"
- Makes friends with peers, leading to social inclusion and interaction
- Children communicate effectively with teachers and others
- More retention in school
- Children are be able to create linkage with the outside world

Notes

- Expands the reach of education
- Improved learning outcomes during primary school
- Helps protect and preserve local languages

The home-school language divide can be overcome to a large extent by adopting the mother tongue as medium of instruction in primary schools and gradually weaning off from mother tongue and initiating learning of second and third language. Local communities also have rich cultural resources: local stories, songs, jokes and riddles, and art, all of which can be used to enrich language and knowledge.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 20.3

Choose the correct option and fill in the blanks:

a) Using the mother tongue in pre school and primary schools will promote less _____ (retention/dropouts).

b) The use of mother tongue in preschool is important in helping promote a feeling of _____(pride/belongingness).

c) If medium of instruction is Bhojpuri but the parents speak English at home, this is a case of home and school _____ (language divide/language unity).

d) Mother tongue is the language spoken at _____(home/ school).

e) Medium of instruction is the language used in _____ (home/ school)

20.4 INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND CASTE STEREOTYPES ON CHILDREN

20.4.1 Stereotypes

Stereotypes exist in all societies. Stereotypes are fixed ideas or assumptions about a group of people. These fixed ideas or stereotypes or assumptions may not be necessarily true or universally accepted. Most of the time how we perceive each other can be determined through oversimplified assumptions about people based on particular traits, such as race, sex, age, caste, religion etc. An individual belonging to that group about which stereotype exists is expected to have the characteristic of that stereotype. For example, if we meet and interact with few individual belonging to a particular caste and exhibiting certain traits and habits, we develop a belief that the members of this caste will

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possess the same traits whereas this may not be true of every member. Stereotypical beliefs can be rigid, but they do and have changed over time.

Stereotypes are not always inherently negative, but because they are assumptions that disregard a person's individual and inherent abilities, opportunities and environment, they tend to be prejudicial. Negative stereotypes hinder peoples' ability to fulfill their potential by limiting choices and opportunities. They are at the root of overt and covert, direct and indirect, and recurrent discrimination.

20.4.2 Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotyping is related to behavior associated with girls and boys and creating beliefs about qualities possessed by a man and a woman. Stereotypical roles of men and women or about people belonging to a particular caste are further strengthened through media in the form of songs, movies, advertisements etc.The table below provides examples of qualities expected in woman and man by the society.

Woman	Man
Dependent	Independent
Weak	Powerful/strong
Less important	More important
Emotional	Logical
Implementers	Decision makers
House keepers	Bread winners
Supporters	Leaders
Fearful	Brave

Teachers should be conscious of not promoting any stereotypes or reaffirming the existing ones.

20.5 PROMOTING GENDER EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION OF ALL IN LEARNING AND PLAY

Schools have the responsibility of promoting gender equality. They can adopt various methods and techniques to achieve this. All activities of learning and play planned in the centre should aim at achieving this goal.

Some of the methods that can be adopted are:

20.5.1 Choosing the Right Toy/TLM

The ECCE centre usually relies heavily on play and toys. These toys can play a significant role in building a gender-friendly centre. The ECCE teacher should

Notes

be concerned about the skills being taught by the toy/play material. Say, for example, a ball may be used to develop motor skills and teaching about sphere. A doll will aid in teaching about the body parts. A gender-sensitive teacher would choose a doll, a car, or building blocks for a child to play with on the basis of the skills each toy develops and not according to the sex of the child. Teacher can choose gender-neutral toys like puzzles, blocks, clay etc. to encourage both the genders to use and play with them.

20.5.2 Telling Stories

Children enjoy listening to stories and narrating them. Stories provide an opportunity for language development and present the curricular content in an interesting manner. Carefully chosen stories will also help in building gender equitable and sensitive classrooms. While deciding the stories, pay attention to the characters in the tales and how the different sexes are portrayed in the story and the characteristics assigned to boys and girls. Are all males working outside house, in farm or factories or in office in the story? Are the women always depicted as fair and beautiful? Are fairies always girls? Are villains always men of huge size? Are girls depicted as working in the kitchen, doing household chores?

After telling the story, engage children in a discussion by asking questions related to role reversals of characters. Tell a story where the mother instead of the father goes to office and the father prepares food. The mother goes to the market to buy equipment and the father cleans the house. The parent of mother live with the family, etc.

20.5.3 Encourage Fair Play

Instead of encouraging girls to play with kitchen set, arrange all the toys within easy reach of all children and allow choices without telling children of a particular gender what to play with or what not to play with. Let children decide what they want to play with. Offer structured time to play with kitchen set, ball, swings etc. to all children. Provide opportunity for all children to play outdoor games like cricket, hockey, kho- kho, kabaddi, football etc.

20.5.4 Encourage Friendships

Encourage children to be friends with both genders. If adults relate to a girl and a boy playing together as "a cute pair", it may bring unnecessary tension, polarity and confusion to the friendship. Encourage team play with each team having boys and girls instead of always selecting the easiest way to create two teams based on the sex.

20.5.5 Avoide Gender-Based Work Distribution

When looking for volunteers to help you with the distribution of food at lunch time or while arranging toys, allow children to volunteer for the work. Boys might show interest in distributing the food and plates while girls might like to arrange toys. If you see gender divide, then encourage gender parity with the request like, "Rohit, would you like to help me in distributing food/ plates/ spoon etc?" or "Tinni, would you like to help me tidy up the toys please?

INTEXT QUESTIONS 20.4

List one way a teacher can promote gender equitable participation in each of the situation listed below:

(a) Choosing toys

(b) Telling stories

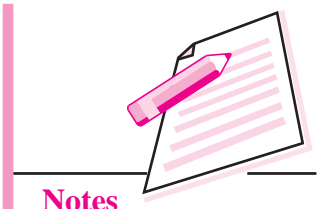
(c) Fair play

(d) Friendship

(e) Work distribution

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Diversity: Meaning and significance
- Recognizing and celebrating differences.
- Factors leading to diversity and their implication to learning
- Race
- Multilingualism
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic status
- Age
- Religious beliefs
- Learning style
- Home and school language divide
- Influence of gender and caste stereotypes on children
- Promoting gender-equitable participation of all children in learning and play
  - ➢ Choosing toys



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- Telling stories
- Encouraging fair play
- Encouraging friendships
- Avoiding gender-based work distribution

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by the term diversity? What types of diversity have you observed in children in your neighbourhood? What are the main factors leading to diversity?
2. What steps will you take to ensure gender equitable participation of children in a preschool?
3. How do childhood experiences get affected by cultural and gender issues?
4. What are the implications of multilingualism for an ECCE centre? List ways of accepting and respecting diversity due to multilingualism.
5. What steps will you take to overcome the home-school language divide while working with tribal children?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

20.1

(a) Caste: It is a system of classification determined by birth.

(b) Race: Race is division of human being on the basis of physical features

(c) Multilingualism: The act of using, or promoting the use of, multiple languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers.

(d) Ethnicity: Belonging to a social group with common national and cultural traditions.

(e) Gender: Refers to social, cultural identity associated with being a boy or a girl/male/female.

20.2

a) False

b) True

c) True

d) True

e) False

20.3

(a) dropouts

(b) belongingness

(c) language divide

(d) home

(e) school

20.4

(a) Choosing toys: Choose toys for the skill they will promote and not according to the sex of the child.

(b) Telling stories: Pay attention to the characteristics attributed to the gender of the character in the story.

(c) Fair play: Allow choices and encourage children to participate in all activities with no reference to their sex.

(d) Friendship: Avoid polarity and encourage friendship between both the sexes.

(e) Work distribution: Do not ask children of one particular gender to do a particular work. Let children choose and volunteer.

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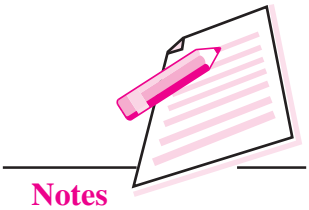

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21

INCLUSION : CONCEPT AND PRACTICE

The Constitution of India states that everyone has the right to equality of education and of opportunity. The 86th amendment of the Constitution has reiterated the need for free, compulsory and universal elementary education as a fundamental right for all children from the ages of 6 to 14 years. The 93rd amendment of the Constitution of India has made education a fundamental Human Right for all children between the ages of six and 14 years, irrespective of caste, class, religion, gender and disability. They need to be brought into the fold of education. The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy, 2013 stresses the importance of, "providing integrated services for holistic development of all children along the continuum from the prenatal period to six years of age. Thus, ensuring a sound foundation for survival, growth and development of the child with focus on care and early learning." (p.1).

The different education commissions and committees at national and international levels have highlighted the pressing need for education of children with different disabilities in the general education system. They emphasize that the educational needs of children with disabilities should be an inseparable part of the general education system. This is in the context of the National Policy of Education (NPE, 1986) which spells the need for equality in educational opportunities to children with disabilities. It focuses on pre-service training of general teachers and orientation of in-service teachers to meet the needs of these children. It also highlights provision of vocational training, establishment of special schools for severely disabled children and encouragement to voluntary organizations. It has suggested several strategies and several schemes for achieving equal opportunities and providing the children with disabilities access to quality education comparable to other children. The Government has also taken significant initiatives for the educational development of children with disabilities.

In the following lesson, you will study about the need and importance of inclusive education and its implications for classroom practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

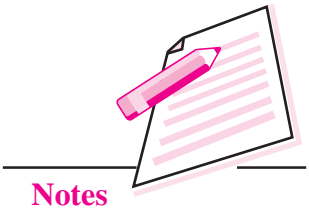
- define inclusion;
- explain the significance of inclusive education;
- list strategies that can be adopted in an inclusive classroom;
- describe inclusion-related government policies and laws; and
- discuss the role of teachers, parents and community in promoting inclusion.

21.1 CONCEPT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education is a process that increase the participation of all children, including those with special needs, in school. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education has advocated the need for inclusive education. India is a signatory to all such statements and has endorsed the concept of inclusive education. The Statement has urged all governments to adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principles of inclusive education and emphasised that children with special needs must have access to regular schools.

It reaffirms inclusion, which implies providing all children equitable and effective education that responds to their needs as learners in the existing regular school system regardless of:

- race
- class
- ethnicity
- religious belief
- being from disadvantaged and marginalized groups
- being from remote and nomadic population
- language
- gender
- geographical location



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- culture
- disabilities

Inclusion entails remodelling and enriching the general education system, making it more comprehensive, supportive and responsive to the needs of all children. Inclusive education ensures that children with special needs are taught in regular schools with their age and grade peers with support services provided within the school system. Thus, it reflects the objective of providing quality education to all children by accommodating their needs and learning styles into the general curriculum. It means all learners are able to learn together in regular schools with appropriate support network. It believes that all children are valuable members of society, whatever their difference and diversities are. Besides, it is a matter of human rights of all children to be together in the existing general education system with their unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs. Therefore, such an education system and programme needs to be designed so that needs of all learners are addressed and diversity is respected.

Inclusion involves a shift of focus from disabilities to the abilities of children and modifies the education system to suit the needs of all learners. It is about creating inclusive policy, inclusive culture and inclusive practices at all levels of the school system. It can be achieved by developing the capacity of schools to respond to children's individual needs. It implies the transformation of traditional approach to a new approach of teaching and learning. Inclusive education ensures holistic development of each child. It requires that we value diversity in teaching and adapt the teaching approaches to support them.

21.1.1 Benefits of Inclusive Education

The benefits of inclusive education for Children With Special Needs are :

- Ensure the children right to equal educational opportunities in regular schools
- Provide opportunities for interaction that would not be otherwise possible in segregated settings
- Maximise educational potential of each child
- Involves children actively in their own learning as well as in the learning of their peers
- Provide a wide range of learning and teaching programmes that encourage all children to participate, learn and experience success
- Sensitize children and teachers to ensure that there is no discrimination
- Set the goals for children in the classroom according to their ability and interests

- ensure appropriate behaviour/conduct from all children including children with special needs
- children with special needs are valued
- ensure the mobilization and involvement of all stakeholders like parents, community and voluntary groups to implement inclusion

INTEXT QUESTIONS 21.1

State whether the following statements are true or false.

(a) All educational programmes must be designed to address needs of all children.

(b) Inclusive education is about 'enabling schools to serve all children'.

(c) Traditional methods of teaching are recommended for inclusive education.

(d) Inclusive education ensures holistic development of all children enrolled.

(e) Only age-appropriate goals are applicable to children with special needs.

Differentiated instruction in practice—

A child with special needs in the motor area is barely able to draw a single line compared to others in class who may be able to do draw complex figures. If all children are to progress, each of these children needs to be addressed at their own level. In such an environment, the teacher needs to help the child according to their strengths and weaknesses to build greater competence. The teacher can accordingly modify the task as per each child's abilities. These interactions and modifications must be a part of ongoing, trusting relationships between the child and the teacher.

21.2 TEACHING-LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Now, the question arises, how to address the individual needs of all children in the classroom? How can we help all children learn in the same classroom? Researchers have indicated that innovative teaching strategies are more beneficial in an inclusive classroom for the children to learn. Inclusive classrooms require changes in methods of teaching and assessment.

Better results can be achieved by following these strategies in the classroom. These are:

i. Differentiated instruction

ii. Cooperative teaching –Learning Strategies

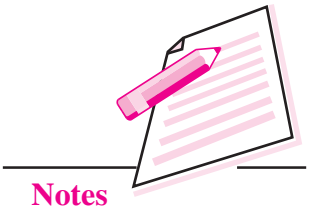
iii. Collaborative Learning

iv. Peer Tutoring

v. Assessment

21.2.1 Diffrentiated Instruction

This is a concept associated with individualized planning and teaching strategies for young children. It implies providing different types of experiences and environment as per the individual needs of each child. The preschool teacher



realizes, through observation that no two children learn at the same pace or in the same way. Some need a lot of practice while others may learn immediately. Some children in the class take to new material easily while others are slower to accept them. Some children learn from reading while some others from listening or from visual aids. There may be children who have trouble in writing while others can understand complex ideas.

In differentiated instructions, the teacher learns to identify what works with each child and ensures that the teaching methodology contains activities and content for each child in the group to "connect with" and benefit from.

21.2.2 Cooperative Teaching- Learning Strategies

Cooperative learning involves more than one child working together to achieve a shared learning goal or task. Cooperative learning is a means of grouping children in small mixed-ability learning teams. The group is presented with a problem to solve or to perform. Children in the group then work among themselves, help one another to complete the task and receive a group performance score. Children work in small groups and cooperate with each other to learn the task also. The role of a teacher is to promote cooperative interdependence among children. There are several benefits of cooperative learning strategies for children with special needs. These are:-

- actively engage in classroom activities
- children articulate their thoughts more freely
- receive confirming and constructive feedback
- engage in questioning techniques
- enjoy enhanced interpersonal relationship with other children
- develop self-esteem better
- use a team approach to solve problems while maintaining individual accountability
- are encouraged to understand and appreciate of diversity
- clearify their ideas through stimulated critical thinking
- enhance self-management skills
- observe and learn problem solving techniques from peers
- receive additional practice on skills, and
- have increased opportunities to respond.

Further, when children are thinking aloud while discussing, teachers are better able to assess child and group needs and intervene when needed. That is, by actively monitoring children's learning, teachers are able to redirect groups toward learning tasks and provide re-teaching during discussions, as required.

Method of organising a cooperative learning based task in a preschool

Task: Colouring the given figure.

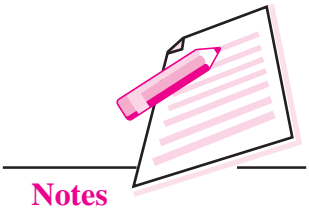
Traditional learning approach: Each child will be given a sheet and crayons to colour. Children complete the given task individually and submit the same to teacher for feedback.

Cooperative learning approach: All children including Children With Special Needs would be divided in small groups, may be groups of five children. Each group is asked to sit in a circle. Each child is given an individual colouring sheet. Each group is given two packets of crayons. Each packet contains 12 crayons. The children are asked to colour the sheets and help each other in their colouring. The group is required to submit the sheets together.

- Reflect on the above task:
  i. Are children collaborating in the task?
  ii. How?
- Challenges one may encounter:
  i. More than two children may wish to use the same crayon at the same time
  ii. Children may scribble over each other's sheets
  iii. The child finishing early may want to finish another child's drawing

Including and respecting all children in the group, reflects the spirit of inclusion and develops the classroom as a community. For example, by being a member of same group the child with speech impairments may learn to express him/herself to others more freely and confidently via gestures and his/her communication skills might improve. Similarly, the other members of the group may learn to accept him as a member of the group and include him/her in the other activities also. Cooperative learning can help promote tolerance, acceptance and empathy by working together in the group.

Comparison of both the approaches	
Traditional approach	Cooperative Learning approach
A good class is a quiet class	Learning involves healthy noise
This is an independent task.	This is collaborative teamwork
Keep your eyes on your paper	Ask your partner for help
Sit quietly	Get up and look at what others are doing
Talking is cheating	Talking is learning



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21.2.3 Collaborative Teaching Strategy

Collaborative teaching strategy is a teaching method in which children work together on an assignment. In this method, children can produce a small part of a larger assignment individually and then assemble the final work together, as a team. Each child is free to work as per individual learning style. Collaborative teaching is sometimes confused with cooperative teaching, which is a method where children work together in small groups on a structured activity. In collaborative learning, children are individually accountable for their work and also for the work of the group as a whole, where both the end products are assessed.

22.2.3.1 Characteristics of Collaborative Teaching Strategy

- **Parity in collaboration:** Each child's contribution is equally valued and children have equal power in decision-making.
- **Voluntary-collaborative relationships:** These are most successful when they are entered into freely and exist by choice.
- **Mutual Goals:** Collaboration occurs in response to a goal, problem, or need that is jointly shared by the children. These goals must be agreed upon by all participants.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Participants share responsibilities in the decision making.
- **Shared Accountability:** Participants have equal accountability for the outcome of their work.
- **Shared Resources:** Participants share materials and human resources.

22.2.3.2 Benefits of collaborative Teaching Strategies

Some benefits of these practices are:

- All children benefit from the expertise of all the members of the group.
- It develops leadership and responsibility.
- Children can learn from each other and solve problems together.
- Instructions take into account different levels of ability.
- It facilitates active participation by all children in the classroom.
- Proper planning ensures active learning by all children.
- Children are assessed based on the individual performance as well as performance of the group.

Thus, we can say that an atmosphere of trust is essential here if teams are to work effectively.

Notes

Collaborative Method

A poster of a big tree for the class

Teacher lays out the required art material on the table for children.

The teacher asks them to make a poster of a big tree to be hung in the class.

Teacher initiates the discussion on which part of the tree each child will be drawing and colouring trunk ,branches, leaves, fruits/flowers. .

This activity will have children working on the part assigned/chosen by them to complete the picture of the tree.

The task will be assessed on:

- Individual performance
- Group performance

21.2.4 Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring implies children teaching children. A peer tutor is someone who is of a similar status as the person being tutored. In peer tutoring, both the tutor and the tutee are of the same grade and the peer tutor helps the peer tutee. There are many benefits for both the tutor and the tutee in this relationship. The peer tutor can establish a rapport with the tutee in a way that a teacher cannot. A child who is not capable of teaching an academic skill, could teach a non-academic skill related to hobbies or interests such as coin collecting, stamp collecting or any other creative art activity. A peer tutor is not involved in the assessment of any task. This strategy is more effective with older children in formal settings.

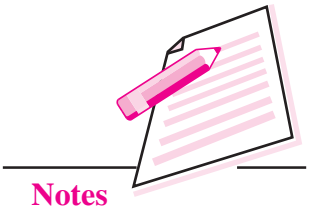
21.2.4.1 Benefits of Peer Tutoring

Some benefits of peer tutoring are:

- Peer tutors are often effective in teaching children who do not respond well when adults teach.
- It develops a bond of friendship between the tutor and the tutee.
- Tutors themselves are benefited by teaching other children as they practice their learning while teaching other children.

21.2.5 Assessment

Assessment involves observing, collecting information and making decisions based on that. It involves identifying what the child knows, what the child understands and what the child can do. Assessments should be continuous. It



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can be diagnostic as it provides information about the children area of strength and recognize the areas that require further attention. In an inclusive setup, the assessments and evaluative processes should be flexible and adapted as per the learning style of children. For example, varying nature of the task according to the child's abilities, giving extra time and assistive resources required etc.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 21.2

Fill in the blanks:

(a) _____ is associated with individualised planning and teaching strategies for young children.

(b) _____ is an instructional method in which children work together on an assignment.

(c) In _____ learning, each child's contribution is equally valued and they have equal power in making decisions.

(d) An atmosphere of _____ is essential if teams are to work effectively.

(e) Peer tutors are _____ by teaching other children as they practice their learning while teaching other children.

21.3 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The changing approaches to disability from the charity model to the human rights model have resulted in diversity of policy and practice. In the 1970s, the IEDC scheme was launched by the Government of India for providing educational opportunities to learners with SEN (Special Educational Needs) in regular schools. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action in 1990s, adopted by representatives of 92 Governments and 25 International Organisations has, in fact, set the policy agenda for inclusive education on a global basis.

21.3.1 Significant Milestones in Legislation

i. Inclusion of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC, 1974)

The government launched a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). The scheme aimed at providing educational opportunities to learners with disabilities in regular schools, and to facilitate their achievement and retention. The IEDC scheme provides for a wide range of incentives and interventions for the education of children with disabilities.

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ii. The National Policy on Education, (NPE) 1986 and its Plan of Action (POA), 1992

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 states that children with mild disabilities should be included in mainstream classrooms, whereas children with moderate to severe disabilities should be placed in segregated schools. The NPE brought the fundamental issue of equality, center stage. To reduce dropout rate, the POA suggests a pragmatic principle for children with disability who can be educated in a general school should be educated in a general school only and not in a special school. The NPE, 1986 envisages measures for integrating the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with confidence.

iii. The RCI Act 1992

The RCI Act provides standards for rehabilitation professionals. It also sets standards for special education teachers trained to teach children with different disabilities. The RCI Act is solely concerned with manpower development for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

iv. The National Trust Act, 1999

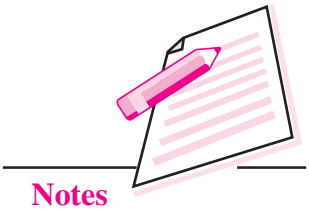
The National Trust Act (National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability), 1999 is a landmark legislation which seeks to protect and promote the rights of persons who come within the disability sector, and have been even more marginalised than others. It prime decision is to make a body of persons for those with disabilities aimed at providing total care and managing the properties bequeathed by the Trust.

v. National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2006

It was released by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in February 2006. As per the policy, every child should have access to appropriate pre-school, primary and secondary level of education by 2020.The programme provides children with disabilities, "financial support for books, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment and aids," with the intention of using these aids to include children in mainstream classrooms. It also emphasises that children upto the age of six years may be identified at the earliest and necessary interventions be made urgently so that they are capable of joining inclusive education at the right age.

vi. Right to Education, (RTE) Act 2009

The RTE Act safeguards the rights of the children belonging to the



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disadvantaged groups and the weaker sections, protecting them from any kind of discrimination and ensure their completion of elementary education

It is not disability-specific but is inclusive of all children with disabilities, with specific sections that address the educational rights of children with disabilities.

vii. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016

The Act replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. It fulfills the obligations to the United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which India is a signatory. The Act came into force during December 2016.

The types of disabilities have been increased from existing 7 to 21 and the Central Government will have the power to add more types of disabilities. The Act includes:

21 disabilities: Blindness,Low-vision, Leprosy Cured persons, Hearing Impairment (deaf and hard of hearing), Locomotor Disability,Dwarfism, Intellectual Disability,Mental Illness,Autism Spectrum Disorder,Cerebral Palsy,Muscular Dystrophy,Chronic Neurological conditions,Specific Learning Disabilities,Multiple Sclerosis,Speech and Language disability,Thalassemia, Hemophilia, Sickle Cell disease, Multiple Disabilities including deaf blindness, Acid Attack victim, Parkinson's disease.

Every child with benchmark disability between the age group of 6 and 18 years shall have the right to free education.

Responsibilities assigned to the appropriate governments to take effective measures to ensure that the persons with disabilities enjoy their rights equally with others.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 21.3

Give the full form of these abbreviations:

(a) IEDC

(b) PWD

(c) RTE

(d) POA

(e) RCI

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(f) CWSN

(g) NPE

21.4 ROLE OF TEACHERS, MANAGEMENT, PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A school accepting all children of school going age irrespective of their strengths or weaknesses, gifts or disabilities, is an inclusive school.

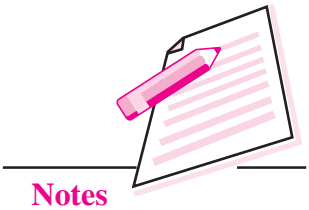
Inclusive education is a pairing of philosophy and pedagogical practices that allow all children to feel respected, confident and safe so they can learn and develop to their full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centered on the best interests of children. Inclusive education is put into practice within school communities that value diversity and nurture the well-being and quality of learning of each and every child. Inclusive education advocates that all children should study together in the school available in the vicinity of their home.

21.4.1 Role of ECCE Teachers, Management and Other Functionaries

To help promote inclusiveness in the learning setup, all stakeholders need to contribute and cooperate. Each must be aware of their roles and expectations. Let us learn how the various stakeholders can contribute to inclusive education programme.

a. Role of ECCE Teachers

1. Early identification of the children with special needs
2. Being sensitive to the needs of children and providing the necessary support
3. Planning and modifying the curriculum by incorporating needs of all children
4. Spreading awareness and sensitising people about the benefits of early identification
5. Counselling and sharing strategies on how to support children with special needs
6. Creating a supportive environment by involving other members of society
7. Making the centre accessible for Children With Special Needs.
8. Encouraging participation of Children With Special Needs in the activities as per the abilities of the child



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9. Prepare case profile of Children With Special Needs to share with other stakeholders
10. Referring the child for special needs services as provided under various schemes of Government policies and programmes
11. Extending the support to formal schools so that the Child With Special Needs gets adjusted to new teachers, school environments and the new teachers and school thereby enabling successful and smooth transition.

b. Role of Management

The Management's support is essentially in the form of:

1. Making the centre accessible to all children
2. Keeping the premises learner-friendly
3. Being sensitive towards the needs of Children With Special Needs
4. Having a positive and supportive attitude
5. Providing required material and support to prepare inclusive and need-based teaching learning material
6. Arranging for professional services like speech therapist, special educator, psychologist
7. Organising identification and assessment camps, etc.

c. Role of Parents

The support of parents is essential in making the inclusive ECCE center a success by:

1. Providing support in enrolling Children With Special Needs in the ECCE centre
2. Realizing that girls with disabilities also have equal rights and require opportunity for developing their potential. Therefore, they should be encouraged to be enrolled in a nearby preschool/ECCE centre
3. Sharing success stories of special needs children so that the motivation level remains high
4. Visit doctors or special education centres as prescribed/suggested by the ECCE teacher
5. Parents can establish:
   - Family moral support group
   - Education support group

6. Volunteering for caregiver training to support the school

The **other functionaries** include the helpers or ayahs, administrative staff, peon, gatekeepers and any volunteer from the society helping in smoothly running the centre. They could also be sensitised about these children and contribute accordingly.

ACTIVITY 21.1

Visit the home of a child with special needs and find out:

a. The parent's understanding of the disability of their child and the probable ways of handling it

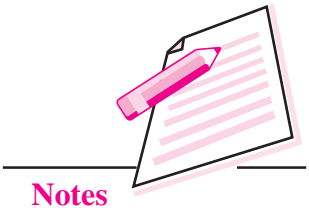
b. Any special resources and facilities available for the child in the neighborhood

d. Role of Community

The community members include the parents, Panchayat members, village education committee/preschool management committee members, local administration and authorities etc.

They can support inclusion of Children With Special Needs by:

- Encouraging enrolment of Children With Special Needs
- Emphasis on enrolment for Girls with Special Needs.
- Preventing their dropout by bringing awareness, motivating the parents and providing necessary support
- Organising awareness and identification camp
- Organising resource support-both human and non-human
- Sharing success stories of Children with Special Needs
- Ensuring Children With Special Needs enrol in nearby formal regular school after completing preschool education.
- Having confidence in the abilities and talents of Children with Special Needs



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 21.4

Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
(i) Peer tutoring	(a) Special needs services
(ii) Inclusive schools	(b) Plan and modify curriculum
(iii) Referring the child	(c) Organise resource support
(iv) Role of management	(d) Special pedagogical practices
(v) Role of teacher	(e) Student-student

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson you have learnt :

- Concept and significance of inclusive education
- Benefits of inclusive education
- Teaching learning strategies for inclusive education
- Differentiated instruction
- Characteristic, significance and benefits of cooperative learning strategies
- Characteristics, significance and benefits of collaborative learning strategies
- Characteristics and benefits of peer tutoring
- Role of government in promoting inclusive education
- Significant milestones in legislation:
  - Inclusion of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC), 1974
  - The National Policy on Education, (NPE) 1986 and its Plan of Action, (POA) 1992
  - The RCI Act, 1992
  - The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
  - The National Trust Act 1999

- National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2006
- Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009

- Role of teachers, management, parents and communities in promoting inclusive education

TERMINAL EXRECISE

1. What do you mean by inclusive education? List the benefits of inclusive education.
2. State the benefits of cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and peer tutoring.
3. Explain in brief the Acts and policies of the Government for persons with disabilities.
4. Briefly explain the role of teachers and management for promoting inclusive education.
5. Suggest five ways in which the community can help promote inclusive education.

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

21.1

(a) True

(b) True

(c) False

(d) True

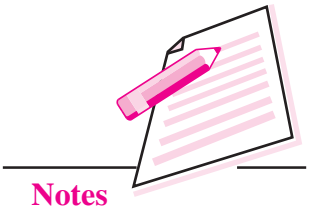
(e) False

21.2

(a) differentiated instruction

(b) collaborative

(c) cooperative



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(d) trust

(e) benefitted

21.3

(a) Integrated Education for Disabled Children

(b) Persons with Disabilities

(c) Right to Education

(d) Plan of Action

(e) Rehabilitation Council of India

(f) Children with Special Needs

(g) National Policy on Education

21.4

i. e

ii. d

iii. a

iv. c

v. b

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22

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

Every child is unique. Children progress rapidly in their early years. Individual children have their own strengths and weaknesses. Their developmental progress occurs in certain sequences, but the pace of development may vary. However, if children display marked problems or difficulties in one (or more) developmental area(s), then they need special care and support.

The early identification of children's developmental delays or learning difficulties helps us understand and take the required steps to support the children and ensure their optimum development and learning. This early identification facilitates the use of intervention strategies to provide the required positive early experiences for children at risk of academic difficulties.

In this lesson you will study the importance of early identification, identification of children requiring special care or interventions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning and significance of early identification;
- discuss the strategies for early identification;
- explain the concept and significance of early intervention;
- identify the strategies for early intervention; and
- discuss assistive technologies for supporting inclusion.

22.1 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Disability can be defined as any limitation or restriction to perform developmentally

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appropriate activities which are desired by society. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health: Children and Youth Version (ICF-CY) defined disability as, "neither purely biological nor social but instead the interaction between health conditions, environmental and personal factors." It described disability at three levels:

- an impairment in body function or structure, such as a cataract which prevents the passage of light and sensing of form, shape, and size of visual stimuli;
- a limitation in activity, such as the inability to read or move around;
- a restriction in participation, such as exclusion from school.

The term, children with disabilities, is used to refer to the children with disabling health conditions or impairment or as a result of illness, poor nutrition or injury.

22.1.1 THE MAJOR DISABILITIES

In our community we see people around who cannot walk or have some body part deformed; have difficulty in seeing or hearing; have difficulty in understanding or learning. These people are suffering from some impairment and are having disability. There is a range of disabilities as defined by different models. The major are listed below.

Sensory impairment: Any condition which implies a loss or impairment of the sensory organs such as hearing, vision, speech and olfactory senses. While a majority of such conditions can be treated and rehabilitated, some conditions persist lifelong and might require therapy and constant support.

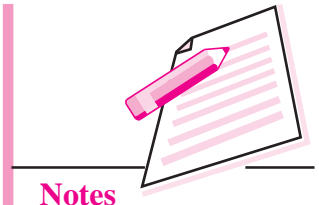
Developmental disabilities: These are diverse group of chronic conditions which are due to mental or physical impairment. This may include delayed or abnormal development. The conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome and Asperger Syndrome falls under this.

Learning disability: This refers to an impairment of cognitive abilities that manifests as a certain type of learning-related disability. These differ from child to child, based on the particular cognitive function that is affected like:

- input (difficulty processing visual information)
- difficulty in processing audio or lingual information
- integration (putting together the information and making sense of it)
- storage (memory-related)
- output (having trouble expressing the information)

The biggest challenge with learning disability is that they are harder to identify and diagnose.

Behavioural issues: Children with behavioural issues may experience difficulty in responding to the regular forms of care and discipline that works with other



children. For example, conditions like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD) are difficult to identify and diagnose since many of these children are initially assumed to be 'difficult' or 'temperamental'.

Mental and psychological conditions: Delayed mental development and mental retardation can be listed as intellectual disorders in children while conditions such as anxiety, chronic depression and mood swings can be classified as psychological disorders. While children with intellectual disorders have early symptoms that can be diagnosed easily, psychological disorders take longer to be detected.

Medical conditions: This bracket includes children suffering from weakening chronic conditions such as heart disease, muscular dystrophy, cancer, cerebral palsy, etc. These children may suffer from long periods of extremely poor health, interspersed with numerous tests, hospital stays and prolonged medication. This negatively impacts a normal childhood.

While each one of these conditions is different from the other, the similarity is in the need for identifying, diagnosing and treating the condition coupled with the need to find the right kind of support, schooling and home environment.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.1

Fill in the blanks.

(a) _____ can be defined as any limitation or restriction to perform developmentally appropriate activities.

(b) Sensory impairment implies impairment of _____.

(c) Children with _____ may experience difficulty in responding to the regular forms of care and discipline.

(d) _____ refers to an impairment of cognitive abilities that manifests as a certain type of learning-related disability.

22.2 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Early Identification refers to the process of recognizing any disability or developmental variations in early childhood years and to understand the need of early intervention. Early identification of learning difficulty or any related developmental delays can make a huge and a positive difference in the life of children and their families. Early identification can significantly minimize the social, behavioral, or learning difficulties the child experiences.

Preschool and kindergarten teachers are at an advantageous position to catch the early signs and symptoms of a developmental delay or disability, and to identify children who are at risk in learning and school. Teachers need to be aware of symptoms and share their observations and concerns with parents and other school specialists.

New legislation, advances in research, and changes in practices have emphasised the need for early identification and interventions. The purpose of early identification is to determine which children have developmental problems that may be obstacles to learning or that places children at risk. Development in early childhood years is characterised by broad variability in rates and patterns of maturation. For some children, differences and delays in abilities are temporary and are resolved during the normal course of development. For other children, delays may persist in different domains of functioning, necessitating the child's referral for special assessment and/or comprehensive evaluation.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) describes people with disabilities as "…those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

At present, no clear distinction can be made in the early years between children whose problems may persist, and those who will make adequate progress with time. Therefore, young children who demonstrate difficulties in early development may or may not be at risk for Learning Disabilities. Nevertheless, screening, evaluation, enhanced learning opportunities, and intervention services should be provided. In the child's best interest, it is not recommended to "wait and see" or hope that the child will "grow out of" her or his problems.

The purpose of early identification is to determine which children have developmental difficulties that may become obstacles to their learning or may place the children at risk. Thus, there is an urgent and substantial need to identify as early as possible those young children in need of services. This will help to ensure that intervention is provided when the developing brain of the young child is most capable of change.

The need for early identification of learning disabilities is highly related to potential. Children who may initially have been thought to have lower intelligence than their peers may have normal intelligence, but may have some other difficulty or different style/approach of learning that prevents them from reaching their potential. Early help can offer children the support needed to reach their full potential. It can improve the quality of a children's life and enable them to perform better at school and in life later.

In order to diagnose a learning disability, it is necessary to establish that the child is experiencing an unexpectedly high level of difficulty in a particular

academic area. For example, it is recognised that children with dyslexia will generally have ongoing difficulties reading accurately and fluently. It is not really easy to judge about academic performance too early, as all children make mistakes when they first start learning to read, spell, write and calculate. This is generally to be expected. It becomes 'unexpected' when these children progress very slowly or continue to struggle for a much longer period of time than the expected period.

Identifying is about recognising difficulties and making prompt interventions to support children and their families so that issues are tackled before they become more serious problems.

Early identification is everyone's responsibility : parents, teachers and other caregivers. There is an increased expectation of all school staff to identify a child who is struggling and put the support in place. Thus, it is important that they have the skills and knowledge they need, to be able to do so.

22.2.1 Identifying Children with Disabilities

Children with disabilities require interventions and support, if they are experiencing any of the following:

Difficulty in oral language

1. Slow development in speaking words or sentences (also referred to as,late talkers)
2. Pronunciation problems
3. Difficulty learning new words; slow vocabulary growth
4. Difficulty finding the right word to use when speaking
5. Difficulty understanding and following simple (one-step) directions
6. Difficulty understanding questions
7. Difficulty recognizing or learning rhyming words
8. Lack of interest in storytelling

Difficulty in reading and writing skills

1. Slow speed in naming objects and colours
2. Limited phonological awareness (rhyming and syllable blending)
3. Difficulty understanding that written language is composed of phonemes (individual sounds) and letters that make up syllables and words
4. Minimal interest in print and limited print awareness
5. Difficulty recognizing and learning the letters of the alphabet
6. Difficulty learning the connection between letters and sounds

Difficulty related to cognition

1. Trouble memorising the alphabet, numbers, days of the week etc.
2. Poor memory for what should be routine (everyday procedures)
3. Difficulty with cause and effect, sequencing, and counting
4. Difficulty with basic concepts, such as size, shape, and colour

Difficulty in motor skills

1. Clumsiness
2. Poor balance
3. Difficulty with fine motor skills and manipulating small objects (stringing beads, tying shoes, buttoning)
4. Difficulty with running, jumping, or climbing (delayed gross motor skills)

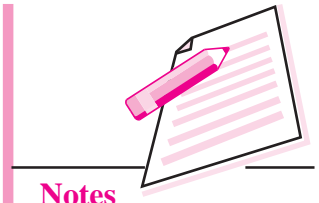
Difficulty in social behavior

1. Trouble interacting with others or playing alone
2. Easily frustrated
3. Hard to manage, temper tantrums
4. Has difficulty following directions
5. Distracted easily and inattentive
6. Impulsive
7. Hyperactive
8. Difficulty in changing activities or handling disruptions to routines

INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.2

State whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Early identification can significantly increases the social, behavioral or learning difficulties of children with disabilities.
2. Preschool teachers are at disadvantageous position to catch the early signs and symptoms of a developmental delay or disability.
3. Development in early childhood years is characterized by broad variability in rates and patterns of maturation.
4. Identifying is about recognising difficulties quickly and making prompt interventions.
5. Poor memory for what should be routine, is associated with motor skills.



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22.2.2 Early Identification Strategies

The need for early identification of children with disabilities is important for the parents, schools and community. Various strategies can be adopted to identify the needs of these children. Various National Policies have emphasized the need for early identification and appropriate interventions to help children with special needs, especially the very young.

National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) also emphasises that children upto the age of six years may be identified at the earliest and necessary interventions be made urgently so that they are capable of joining inclusive education at the right age.

The identification process includes:

(1) Screening

(2) Examination for the presence of risk indicators and protective factors

(3) Systematic observations

(4) Comprehensive evaluation

***Screening*:** Screening refers to determining the areas where children need assistance. There should be a system to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who need early intervention or special education services.

Risk indicators and protective factors: A range of environmental, biological, genetic, and prenatal conditions are associated with adverse developmental outcomes and may be considered as risk indicators or warning signs of learning disability. However, risk indicators do not always predict which children will have future learning problems. Risk indicators must be considered within the context of typical developmental expectations. Protective factors like special schools, educators and therapists are factors that reduce risk and foster resilience and help buffer children from circumstances that place them at risk.

Systematic observations : Systematic observations of a child's behavior and abilities over time is important. Observations may be informal or may follow a standard observation methodology. In either case, they should be conducted multiple times and in varying contexts (e.g., home, preschool, classroom, playgroup). Observations should provide information of the frequency, consistency and severity of the behaviors leading to concerns.

Comprehensive evaluation: When a screening, a review of risk indicators and protective factors, and systematic observations suggest that a child is at risk then professionals should conduct periodic evaluations to ascertain whether development follows expected patterns. The major goal of a comprehensive evaluation is to determine the individual child's specific pattern of abilities and

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needs and to identify strategies and resources to address learning and behavioral problems as soon as possible. These evaluations should occur across different settings and should consider multiple perspectives.

Proper identification is crucial for the implementation of appropriate and timely intervention. Early intervention to address developmental delays can make a crucial difference in the children's life.

22.3 EARLY INTERVENTIONS

Early intervention means doing things as early as possible to work on the child's developmental, health and support needs. Early intervention services give specialised support to children and families in the early years, generally from birth until the child turns five. It is hoped that these services, provided early, will address any delays in development.

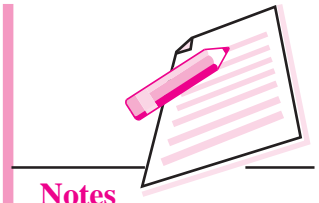
Early intervention services are a range of special and specific services to help young children who have developmental delays. Different types of specialists work with these children giving them specialised support. This support might include special educators, therapists, counselors etc. Early intervention helps to address the developmental delays and can make a crucial difference in the children's life.

A child who qualifies for an early intervention programme may receive one or more of these services:

- Screening and assessment
- Speech and language therapy
- Physical or occupational therapy
- Psychological services
- Home visits
- Medical, nursing or nutrition services
- Hearing (audiology) or vision services
- Social work services
- Transportation or mobility

Advantages of early interventions

- Improve children's developmental, social and educational gains
- Reduce feelings of isolation, stress and frustration that families may experience
- Help alleviate and reduce behavioural issues by using positive behaviour strategies and interventions



- Help children with disabilities grow up to become productive, independent individuals
- Reduce the future costs of special education, rehabilitation and healthcare needs

INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.3

Explain the following terms listed below in one sentence only:

1. Screening
2. Comprehensive evaluation
3. Early intervention
4. Risk indicators

22.3.1 Strategies for Early Intervention

Intensive early intervention for children with disability is the most effective kind of intervention. It is not just about the number of hours, it is also about the quality of those hours and how the therapy supports the child. Parents and teachers are usually the first interventionists for developmentally delayed infants and young children.

Different children respond in different ways to interventions, so no single programme will suit all children and their families. Focus on what the child requires. A good intervention involves regular assessment to ensure that the child is making progress. The gains might be small initially, but they could all add up. Many children with a disability can benefit from some type of early intervention or therapy. For example:

- **Occupational therapy** can help with fine motor skills, play and self-help skills like dressing and toilet training
- **Physiotherapy** can help with motor skills like balance, sitting, crawling and walking
- **Speech therapy** can help with speech, language, eating and drinking skills

A variety of some other child-focused strategies have shown evidence of success including interacting with peers, prompts, modeling techniques and intermittent reinforcement. These strategies should be implemented with uniformity, conformity and regularity. Parents and educators need to be properly trained to implement these teaching strategies. It is important to remember that all children are unique and require techniques and strategies individualised to their needs.

22.3.2 Characteristics of Quality Interventions

Family-centred

- Includes the family members to work alongside the professionals and learn how to help the child
- Is flexible, can be offered in the home as well as in other settings such as preschools and early intervention centres
- Provides the family with support and guidance

Developmentally appropriate

- Is specially designed for children in relation to the disability
- Has staff who are specially trained in the intervention and services they provide
- Develops an individual plan for each child and reviews the plan regularly
- Tracks the children's progress with regular assessments

Child-focused

- Includes strategies to help children practice difficult skills or learn new skills and use them in different settings
- Prepares and supports children for optimum development
- Finds ways of getting children with disability together with other children, ideally of the same age

Supportive and structured

- Provides a supportive learning environment where children feel comfortable and supported
- Is highly structured, well organised, regular and predictable

These interventions consist of multidisciplinary services to enhance skills, minimise developmental delays and functional deterioration and promote health and well-being of children.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.4

Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
1. Occupational therapy	(i) speaking
2. Physiotherapy	(ii) individual plan for each child
3. Speech therapy	(iii) supportive learning environment
4. Supportive and structured	(iv) self-help skills
5. Developmentally appropriate	(v) balance, sitting, crawling

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22.4 ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUPPORTING INCLUSION

When children with disabilities are given opportunities to flourish like all other children, they have the potential to lead fulfilling lives and to contribute socially, culturally and economically. One of the most important ways for children with disabilities to flourish is through their access to assistive technology.

Assistive technology refers to "any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities." Assistive technology includes products and related services that contribute to the functioning of children with disabilities. They promote children's development and health, as well as their participation in various activities of life. Assistive devices and technologies are those whose primary purpose is to maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence to facilitate participation and to enhance overall well-being. They can also help prevent impairments and secondary health conditions. Examples of assistive devices and technologies include wheelchairs, prostheses, hearings aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware that increase mobility, hearing, vision, or communication capacities.

Assistive technology can enhance the quality of life of both children and their families through communication, mobility, self-care, household tasks, family relationships, education, and engagement in play and recreation.

To improve access to assistive technology, all related stakeholders need to come together for the provision of assistive technology. Appropriate assistive technology can be a powerful tool to increase children's independence and improve their participation. It can help children become mobile, communicate more effectively, see and hear better, and participate more fully in learning and play activities.

Providing assistive technology to children as early as possible will facilitate their development and prevent secondary conditions such as deformities.

22.4.1 Examples of Assistive Technologies

Some examples of assistive technologies are:

- Mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, canes, crutches, prosthetic devices, and orthotic devices
- Hearing aids to hear or hear more clearly
- Braille, speech-audio recorders or screen-reader for visually impaired
- Cognitive aids, including computer or electrical assistive devices, to help with memory, attention, or other challenges
- Computer software and hardware, such as voice recognition programs, screen

readers, and screen enlargement applications.

- Tools such as automatic page turners, book holders, and adapted pencil grips to help children with disabilities participate in educational activities
- Physical modifications in the built environment, including ramps, grab bars, and wider doorways to enable access to school.
- Lightweight, high-performance mobility devices that enable to play sports and be physically active
- Adaptive switches and utensils to allow those with limited motor skills to eat, play games, and accomplish other activities
- Protective headgear that ensure the physical well-being of children with epilepsy and enable them to participate in activities important for social well-being
- A pressure relief cushion in a wheelchair that can protect a child with paralysis from pressure sores and associated infections
- A communication board that can support a child with speech difficulties to express themselves
- A screen reader that can make it possible for a child who cannot see to access information on the Internet
- An alternative way of showing time that can help a child with an intellectual disability

Some children with severe disabilities who are unable to attend school can access education from home and communicate with others with the help of assistive technologies. For example, ICTs offer new ways to break down accessibility barriers and provide children with disabilities varied opportunities.

22.4.2 Barriers to Assistive Technology

Disability is related to the interaction between a child with impairment and an environment with barriers that hinder his or her participation on an equal basis with others. Assistive technology can help reduce or eliminate such barriers.

Some barriers to easy access to assistive technology are:

Lack of awareness: Many people with disabilities and their families have limited awareness of assistive products and services.

Lack of governance including legislation, policies and national programmes: For many states, provision of assistive technology is a relatively low area of priority.

Lack of services: Assistive technology services are often in short supply and located far away from where children with disabilities live.

Lack of products: In many countries, there is no production of assistive products or are produced on a small scale. It is small not only in terms of quantity, but also in terms of the range of types, models and sizes of the products.

Children with special needs ought to be provided diagnosis and remediation early in their lives. The parents are the primary interventionists with the school personnel providing additional support and directions for the remedial activities. Intervention needs to be implemented early and consistently to assure success of all children in academics as well as social interactions. A coordinated effort of intervention will contribute immensely to the inclusion into the mainstream and academic achievement.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.5

Fill in the blanks.

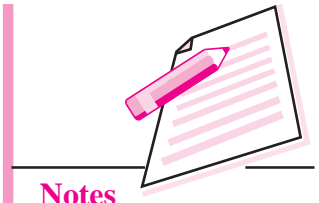
1. ..... can help prevent impairments and secondary health conditions in children with disabilities.
2. Assistive technology can ..... the quality of life of both children and their families through communication, mobility and self-care.
3. Wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, canes, crutches are examples of .... aids
4. Many people with disabilities and their families have ..... awareness of assistive products and services.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Children with disabilities
- The major dsabilities:
  - Sensory impairment
  - Developmental disabilities
  - Learning disability
  - Behavioural issues
  - Mental and psychological conditions
  - Medical conditions

Notes

- Identifying children with disabilities
  - Difficulty in oral language
  - Difficulty in reading and writing Sskills
  - Difficulty related to cognition
  - Difficulty in motor skills
  - Difficulty in social behavior
- Meaning and significance of early identification
- Early identification strategies
  - Screening,
  - Examination
  - Systematic observations
  - Comprehensive evaluation
- Early interventions
  - Early intervention programme services
  - Advantages of early interventions
- Strategies for early intervention
  - Occupational therapy
  - Physiotherapy
  - Speech therapy
- Characteristics of quality interventions
  - Family centred
  - Developmentally appropriate
  - Child focused
  - Supportive and structured
- Assistive technologies for supporting inclusion
  - Types of assistive technologies
- Barriers in assistive technology
  - Lack of awareness
  - Lack of governance including legislation, policies and national programmes
  - Lack of services
  - Lack of products



Notes

TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you mean by "Children with Disabilities" ?
2. List the areas in which children may exhibit a disability.
3. Explain in brief the meaning and significance of early identification.
4. Discuss in brief some early identification strategies.
5. Explain briefly strategies for early intervention.
6. List the characteristics of quality interventions.
7. How can assistive technologies support inclusion?
8. What are the barriers to easy access of assistive technologies?

ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

22.1

(a) Disability (b) Sensory organs (c) behavioural issues (d) Learning disability

22.2

1. False 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. False

22.3

1. Determining areas where children need assistance.
2. Determining child's specific pattern of abilities and needs and identifying to address the needs.
3. Providing support as early as possible to work on the children's developmental, health and other needs.
4. A range of environmental, biological, genetic, and prenatal conditions.

22.4

1. (iv) ; 2. (v); 3. (i); 4. (iii) ; 5. (ii)

22.5

1. Assistive technology 2. enhance 3. mobility 4. limited

Notes

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- Ministry of Human Resource Development (1986). The National Policy on Education, 1986. New Delhi. Retrieved from https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/npe.pdf
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